

**An Analysis of Task-based Language Teaching
Material for Learners in High School Course Books in Iran.**

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Abstract

Task-based language teaching (TBLT) is one of the most interesting teaching methods in recent years to promote new aspects of learning, such as communicative competence and autonomous learning. Reviewing the literature reveals that analyzing meaningful insights in the task-based provision and authentic improvement in the Iranian context is neglected. The qualitative and quantitative results of the study address the gap through an analysis of the dimensions of tasks (Nunan's theory, 2004) and exploring the task components by applying Nunan's typology (1999, 2004). The findings of the study contribute to echoing teachers' perceptions and changing material providers' insights into the policy of task-based learning in English course books in Iran. This topic was chosen because of the popularity of task-based teaching materials in Iranian high schools, as well as the implications for evaluating the communicative-oriented framework of learning.

The first objective of the study is to investigate whether English textbooks in high schools in Iran include elements of task-based learning. The second objective involves exploring to what extent task-based materials and language performance are employed in high schools in Iran according to teachers' perspectives. The findings of the discourse analysis showed that cognitive and linguistic tasks were the most recurrent types, while the most important tasks in the TBLT framework, such as affective and creative, were ignored. Moreover, the study achieved a number of valuable insights into the task components as factors for exploring the extent of applying TBLT in English course books in Iran. The results indicated that 'input' and 'task types' were overemphasized contributing to collaborative language learning and providing learners with mastery of the linguistic system. The findings of the study provide the analysis and experts' insights into the rationale of reforming English materials, which may have pedagogical implications in improving the communicative knowledge of Iranian students.

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List of Abbreviation

EFL	English as a Foreign Language
RQ	Research Question
L2	Second Language
TBLT	Task-Based Language Teaching
PBL	Problem-based Learning
ELT	English Language Teaching
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
P-P-P	Presentation, Practice, Production
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
BERA	British Educational Research Association
ESL	English as a Second Language
TBL	Task-based Learning

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Chapter One:

Introduction

Introduction

This chapter includes the background, objectives, rationale, and organization of the research. First, the general and important themes that inspired the study are outlined. Then, a brief historical development of task-based language teaching (TBLT) and related concepts are presented. In addition, the characteristics that make the study significant and distinguish it from other research in the field are pointed out.

Task-based language teaching has been one of the most interesting teaching methods in recent years to develop the new aspects of language learning, such as communicative language and critical thinking, but is this method considered in some Asian countries to address those aspects? Most educational research in Iran is devoted to the different teaching approaches and the ability of Iranian students to communicate in English and master the language. That is achieved by a well-designed syllabus and efficient teacher performance in English classrooms.

The researcher is motivated to explore this area by focusing on the most critical factors of TBLT, namely the use of communicative tasks and the unintentional confrontation with a new language during the task complementation (Willis & Willis, 2007). As a key component of this approach, TBLT attempts to move from teacher-centered approaches to learner-centered teaching methods via a social and problem-solving orientation (Long & Crooks, 1992, p. 38), which is a serious challenge for most teachers and learners in the Iranian context. Since Iranian textbooks have recently been reformed to shift from conventional teaching methods to the application of communicative pedagogies and introduce student-based learning, the curriculum and syllabi in Iranian high schools are other open issues in the field of English teaching (Shakhsi Dastgahian & Scull, 2022). After three decades of the Revolution in Iran and teaching an inflexible curriculum as a result of

the conservatism trends and the state's hesitation towards English in terms of providing relevant and revised English course books, the first and second volumes of a six-series of English course books for high schools were published, in 2013 and 2014, respectively (Kennedy, 2015). After textbook revision, students' active involvement in the learning process and use of the target language in communications, as well as encouraging the teachers to improve learners' communicative skills and minimize using their mother tongue, were considered (Kennedy, 2015). Consequently, the new curriculum in Iran must be evaluated to see if the content providers could change the old beliefs about English as a means of translation or grammar-based techniques. For example, changing the direct teaching approaches that include some grammatical structures related to 'present simple tense' and its formula, 'making requests' and 'discussing the present simple tense' have been considered the main goals of students' learning (Rozati, 2014). Hence, this study aims to investigate the main framework of the teaching materials, i.e., the course books, evaluate the frequency of applying the different tasks in Iranian course books, and explore teachers' perceptions and performance of task-based language teaching in high schools in Iran.

This chapter will discuss the nature of communicative skills and approaches, educational policy purposes, and classroom realities. Some challenges inherent in teaching within a predetermined framework, i.e., textbooks will be discussed, including how a textbook is introduced as a 'task-based' material and resource.

1.1.1. Purpose of the study

The main purpose of this study is to develop an understanding of the status of tasks in Iranian textbooks and to consider teachers' perceptions of task-based language teaching in Iran. Language theorists (e.g., Nunan, 2004; Long, 2015; Skehan, 1996; Krashen, 1982; Willis, 1996; Ellis, 2003; Prabhu, 1987; Shintani, 2016; Candlin, 1987) assume that there is a relationship between competence and performance, and this view is closely related to

the process of language acquisition, i.e., language use, which includes speaking and writing and language learning, i.e., improving grammatical and lexical competence in the second language (Candlin & Mercer, 2003, p. 15). Thus, an initial challenge is to evaluate the framework of the educational policy in response to the growing need for English in a country (e.g., Iran) where most people speak their native language (Nunan, 2003).

There is now a large body of research on the evaluation of course books used in high schools in Iran. The main motivation for this study was the identification of gaps in the literature in terms of a lack of research evidence for evaluating TBL resources in Iranian high school English textbooks.

In addition, this study will delve into the English textbooks taught in Iran to gain a broader understanding of the purpose of providing current English textbooks in Iranian high schools. High school course books are also chosen for analysis due to the researcher's experience as an English teacher, indicating the importance of communicative-based materials as well as teachers' knowledge of TBLT, the syllabi framework, and pedagogical processes in Iran.

1.1.2. Rationale

The current study attempts to investigate whether course books in Iran involve the standard components of tasks and the characteristics of a good task in TBLT classrooms. In this regard, Iranian teachers need to understand the purpose of task-based instruction, including developing learners who can use English outside the classroom (Willis & Willis, 2007, p. 3). This research can increase teachers' awareness of useful discourse and communicative competencies appropriate to specific contexts to which learners have not been exposed previously (Candlin & Mercer, 2003, p. 19). This study is conducted in order to categorize common and specific tasks in terms of providing a critical pedagogy to enable students to

take the educative imperative and encourage them to act on knowledge, social relations, and valuable issues that they require (Ellis, 2021, p. 11). Indeed, how learners think and how they can be rational need to be considered to enhance critical thinking frameworks in Iran. Therefore, in such cases, the teaching material (e.g., a textbook) should be evaluated to see if its content conveys the purpose of TBLT to the learners. This study contributes to the debate on applying task-based teaching not only for developing the language but also for improving the way of thinking and problem-solving skills among learners through the use of an authentic and communicative language.

1.2. Background of the Study

One of the most important questions that has needed to be addressed in recent years is ‘How should we teach languages?’ (East, 2021, p. 11). But this question needs a complementary part involving ‘how do we develop teaching people as groups and societies?’ It includes an introduction to the world outside the classroom and encourages learners to present their ideas and communicate effectively. Some new methods of English teaching, such as TBLT, have heightened the willingness to limit teachers’ role in terms of monitoring the performance of learners in pairs or small groups in the classroom; for example, they can help students if there is a communication breakdown and play the role of timekeeper during completing a task (Ellis, 2021). Students learn knowledge that they are not aware of while they can use this knowledge in real-time contexts (Leowm & Sato, 2017, p.4). For instance, some researchers believe that TBLT can provide productive use of language opportunities to push or modify output and review, paraphrase, and recognize how they communicate (Brumfit, 1979; Ellis, 1994; Skehan, 1996, as cited in Erlam & Tolosa, 2022, p.7). In other words, teachers need to trust students and provide them with different opportunities to use the language outside the classroom (Willis & Willis, 2007, p. 3). The classroom must not induce people to internalize a sense of permanent visibility and serve as an object of supervision (Foucault, 2008, p. 6). This situation has been designed

for a long time in Iran in terms of limited curriculum and syllabus, as well as limited learner autonomy. The government's surveillance was on teachers' actions through supervised content and course books that determined what to teach and what to examine (Jardine, 2005, as cited in Kim, 2010). Partovi and Wyness (2020) work on the Iranian pupil's voice and represent student surveillance by placing teachers' desks above the students and watching the students at all times as a formal sovereign. Foucault (1975) points out the long-term impacts of this situation as the panopticon when the restrictions are omitted and there are no more limitations and no heavier inspections, people behave according to whatever the supreme power wants; so, the unacceptable 'old house of security' is replaced with a 'house of certainty' (p.202). Therefore, both older and new generations of teachers and students still perform according to internalized rules (Kim, 2010) and the educational panopticon.

Nevertheless, deductive teaching methods such as grammar, translation, and auditory language have all undergone changes and reforms. In the 1960s, popular second language teaching methods were grammar-translation and auditory-linguistic methods (Candlin & Mercer, 2003, p. 44). Reading and writing skills are the main issues in this method, while accuracy is emphasized and teachers can use the students' native language as the medium of instruction (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 6-7). The purpose of auditory linguistics is to repeat listening and speaking exercises and pay attention to what learners hear and say in real language (East, 2021, pp. 12–13).

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the norm for ELT teaching was the presentation of a language feature through controlled practices and some determined materials in textbooks, and encouraging the production of the target structures after practising in the classrooms (Shintani, 2016, p. 3). Technical knowledge and practical knowledge were taken into account after the appearance of the PPP approach. Technical knowledge refers to the explicit process and rules for doing something, whereas practical knowledge is an implicit and intuitive learning strategy. For example, you know how to tie a shoelace, but

when you have technical knowledge, you know very little about the sequence of actions (Candlin & Mercer, 2003, p. 46). In the same vein, Willis and Willis (2007) assert that communicative language teaching (CLT) and task-based language teaching (TBLT) are a new and reversed version of PPP, in which production stages take precedence over grammar learning and control practices in classrooms. TBLT researchers believe that conducting TBLT in the classroom involves a complicated process, e.g., three main phases in TBLT classrooms: a pre-task phase, a main task phase, and a post-task phase (Estaire & Zanon, 1994; Willis, 1996, as cited in Shintani, 2016, p. 4). Although some researchers suggest that the pre-task phase is designed as a supportive phase, Skehan (1996, p. 54, as cited in East, 2012) suggests that the purpose of the pre-task phase is to ‘moderate cognitive complexity’ to ease the process of doing a task. TBLT facilitates the reception of additional and conflicting information through interactive conditioning during the task (Skehan, 2016). The post-task stage provides follow-up activities in different contexts, and teachers’ evaluation of the final products is achieved (Anwar & Arifani, 2016).

At the end of the twentieth century, task-based language teaching was thought to be a teaching approach that allowed students to communicate in an interactive classroom and apply their knowledge in the real world and outside the classroom. In this regard, Bloom et al. (1956) believe that there are different ranges of thinking skills, such as interactivity, problem-solving, and critical thinking, which not only reduce the interpretation and translation of language but also involve applying knowledge in a specific context (p. 38). The students learn to analyze and evaluate the existing communication, information, and discussion using logic and reason (Beyer, 1985; Browne & Keeley, 2011; Dewey, 1910; Fisher & Scriven, 1997, as cited in Heard et al., 2020) that contribute to achieving knowledge-acquisition components to solve problems, decision making, and learn new concepts (Heard et al., 2020). Problem-solving includes interaction between a learner’s experience and the demands of the task (Martinez, 1998, p.606). When learners undertake problem-solving and decision-making tasks, they can solve the problem by sharing information (East, 2021, p.51). In this regard, learners continually encounter sets of events

in the classroom that need to be solved; solutions to the problems should involve the creative application of previous knowledge and information to correctly identify the meaning of a word or interpret an utterance (Brown, 2000, p.97).

However, according to the analysis of learner-centered approaches, teaching and learning materials should meet learners' needs as a curriculum (Brindley, 1989). The curriculum is viewed as a plan of conduct, rule implementation, and output that can be effective in TBLT classrooms; the plan includes the syllabus, course books, and other related resources that end with assessment instruction (Swain, 2005, p. 471; as cited in East, 2021). At the same time, the role of tasks in achieving a suitable output in the applied course books is outlined, along with additional considerations for the curriculum and syllabus as the main framework (Alemi et al., 2020; Kafipour et al., 2018; Saragih et al., 2022; Dao & Newton, 2021). Thus, the advent of TBLT and the general increase in implicit rather than explicit instruction had a significant impact on the fundamentals of the traditional curriculum (Alemi et al., 2020, 2019) and finding the learners' needs. The impact of task-based language teaching and changing the structure of the course books raises questions about the effectiveness of using the tasks in different content areas and the consideration of all kinds of tasks in designing a productive plan and syllabus.

1.3. Statement of the Research Focus

In the field of second language acquisition, there is a broad field of research on how to achieve the most applicable results in terms of teaching methods. Textbook analysis has long been considered a strategy for judging materials and asking questions about what the materials contain, what they aim to achieve, and what they ask learners to do (Tomlinson, 2003, p. 16). According to evaluations, the significance of course books, the characteristics of a good course book, the limitations or relative materials of a course book, and the criteria for evaluating a course book are the most important issues in the SLA research domain to

address the subjective and objective needs of learners. In addition, this process helps to summarize and determine the material development of the teaching materials and the effectiveness of the teaching materials (Tomlinson, 2003). Even so, most of the textbook analysis and studies in Iran are carried out using learner-centered approaches with two goals: language content and learners' needs. These two types of analysis include both objective (factual information about learners and contexts, the use of language in real-life communication, their proficiency, and language difficulties) and subjective (cognitive aspects, confidence, attitudes, and learners' expectations in relation to their individual cognitive and learning methods) needs of analysis (Kennedy, 2015, p. 49). As such, there is a paucity of research in terms of significant insights into objective aspects of analysis and authentic improvement; in particular, examining real-life communication skills and language difficulties in this respect should be considered.

Although some reforms and changes have been made in English textbooks since 2010, task-based language instruction, higher-order thinking skills, and communicative aspects of learning are neglected in order to produce appropriate material in the Iranian context. This study aims to address the gap by analyzing course book content and teachers' perceptions of those who have more than eight years of experience in the same educational context.

1.4. Research Questions

This study also addresses the following research questions:

1. Are task-based materials and language performance conducted as part of the curriculum in English course books in Iran?
2. To what extent are task-based materials and language performance employed in high schools in Iran, (according to Nunan's (1989) theory of task components)?

1.5. Definition of Key Terms

1.5.1. Course book

Course books provide a cohesive resource for the language teaching and learning process by providing guidance, providing support, and specifying activities and tasks for learners in the classroom (Tomlinson, 2003, p. 130). Furthermore, course books are the most important guides and materials on the syllabus for learners to use during their learning process (Saeed et al., 2021). In general, this is the course where teachers are expected to follow the content of the book, and learners are assessed on their achievement of the book (McGrath, 2006, p. 307, as cited in Celik, 2022, p. 8).

1.5.2. Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT)

One definition of TBLT refers to communicative involvement in pedagogical tasks to provide suitable and sufficient materials for successful second language acquisition (Nunan, 2004, p. 21). In addition, TBLT organizes a strong framework of communicative language teaching and improves learners' knowledge of a second language while applying this knowledge to communicate through engaging in communicative tasks (Tomlinson, 2011, p. 212). Therefore, the most effective way to teach language is to engage in real language use in the classroom. Tasks, games, problems, and discussions are used to encourage students to use the language in real-world situations and outside the classroom (Willis & Willis, 2007, p. 1) which is an innovation in the Iranian context.

1.5.3. Task

A task is a piece of work that is considered by learners freely or for a specific reward, for example, painting a fence, going shopping, or taking a driving test (Long, 1985, p. 89). However, there are other linguistic meanings involving communicative language use in which learners focus on mobilizing grammatical knowledge to deal with meaning (Nunan, 2004, p. 4). Willis (1996) suggests that ‘tasks are always activities where the target language is used by learners for a communicative purpose (goal) in order to achieve an outcome’ (p. 23). Tasks are meaningful, and learners need to communicate when they are doing them; for example, working in small groups with a train schedule to find the most direct route to travel by train (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011, p. 192). Tasks aim to use language in the classroom to achieve communicative outcomes and proficiency in the use of a second language (East, 2021, p. 46).

1.5.4. Course Book Analysis

The course book analysis includes material evaluation, through which the content of materials is evaluated, as well as the aims to achieve and the activities that are asked to be done by learners; for example, does it provide a transcript of the listening test? Are the listening tests able to engage learners, which can be answered by ‘very unlikely’ or ‘very likely’ (Tomlinson, 2003, p. 16)? Course book or textbook analysis is a tool for identifying the features of a text or course book and evaluating the effectiveness of the textbooks (O’keeffe, 2012). It entails examining only a section of a larger instructional procedure that employs the textbook as well as a process that may have preceded and may have followed (Risager, 2018, p. 9).

1.6. Overview of the Study

The present study as a whole will examine the content of the English course books in Iran as well as explore teachers' perceptions towards the consideration of task-based teaching in the course books. In the overview chapter, purpose, rationale, background, a statement of the problem, research questions, and key terms were introduced. To review the background of the study, discuss the research questions in relation to empirical and theoretical findings, and identify the gaps in the research, a literature review will be provided in Chapter two. Chapter three includes a description of the details of the chosen method. Information about the materials and ethical implications of this study is provided as well. Chapter four will report the key results and findings related to the research questions, and finally, chapter five will bring this study to a conclusion and provide a detailed overview of the main implications for further research.

Chapter Two

Literature review

2.1. Introduction

Over the past 30 years, the most considerable issue in the field of learning English has been the role of instruction, focusing on task-based learning and teaching (Jung, 2016). According to the modernization of the curriculum, communication and connection with the real world's activities are taken into account through tasks; this can be shown when the focus is on meaning rather than form and function. At the same time, in Asia, some traditional English teaching methods, such as grammar translation, audiolingual methods, etc. have also been adopted and criticized (Butler, 2011). As learners need to follow the rules and content of the books that are taught in Asian countries such as Iran, textbooks have been found as supplemental materials in English classrooms.

Textbooks are of high status in Iran, and the materials are produced according to the syllabus and curriculum developed by the Ministry of Education (Salehi & Amini, 2016). Since all high schools in Iran use unified textbooks, and many teachers have criticized this situation and the content, evaluating the English Language Teaching, ELT, course books through the teachers' points of view will be of paramount significance. Moreover, the teacher's perspective is important because they can review the materials more than once; they are able to reflect on what materials worked well and which ones were too easy or difficult to teach (Tomlinson, 2011, p. 271). In addition, teachers can improve some specific mutable factors, such as 'motivation' (Ellis & Shintani, 2014) by echoing the situations in the L2 classroom.

The chapter includes a review of the literature and research that considers various aspects of teaching and task-based instruction over the last two decades. At the end of this chapter, an overview of the relevant research from Iranian and European researchers is provided to

consider gaps in task-based language teaching materials for learners in high school course books. Finally, the identified gap in this area is considered after reviewing the literature, so the researcher tries to indicate how this research can contribute to improving some pedagogical aspects of language learning and teaching in Iran.

2.1.1. Definition of Task

According to Nunan (2004), ‘knowing that’ and ‘knowing how’ are the most important issues in SLA classrooms. They involve knowing and being capable of restating the grammatical rules and using the grammatical knowledge to communicate in an effective way, respectively (p. 7). However, Blackwell (2016), in a review of Long’s book, outlined the tools for achieving knowledge as ‘units of analysis throughout the course design, implementation, and evaluation intended to meet the communicative needs of diverse groups of learners’. In the same vein, Long (2015) believed that tasks are pieces of work considered for learners as facilitators which involve meaning rather than grammatical form (p. 438). For example, if learners are asked to draw a map while listening to a tape (Richards et al., 1986, as cited in Nunan, 2004), a task is defined to improve the learner’s skill. Tasks provide different opportunities for free and meaningful application of the target language (Willis, 1996, p.30). This concept refers to a task as a short practice exercise or a more complex work plan that entails spontaneous communication (Ellis et al., 2020, p.6) as a goal. Hence, tasks are goal-oriented, i.e., completing a task successfully involves accomplishing the task and achieving an outcome (Gonzalez-Lloret, 2015, p.3).

Prabhu (1987, p. 24, as cited in Butler, 2011) defined ‘task’ as cognitive activities that resulted from specific thought processes organized and regulated by the empowered teacher. Following the clarification of the meaning of the cognitive process, Tomlin and Villa (1994) suggested the human attentional system could regulate and control the inflow of information and input as a cognitive process. While Prabhu argued that task-based

instruction involved concepts in which meaning content was consciously processed, some linguistic structures were discriminated, abstracted, and learned or reproduced as cognitive structures in the subconscious of the mind (1987, as cited in Robinson & Gilbert, 2013). But today, the consciousness or sub-consciousness of tasks is debated, so all skills should not be taught through conscious tasks such as communicative skills. To clarify this issue, Estaire and Zanon (1994, as cited in Chowdhury, 2014) classified the tasks into two main groups: *i) communication-oriented tasks* and *ii) enabling tasks*. They believed that the first group involved learners' focus on meaning (communication-oriented), while the second group was closely related to linguistic aspects such as discourse, grammar, and function, as well as pronunciation and vocabulary (cognition-oriented). Willis (1996) also believed that tasks primarily referred to activities in which learners used the target language to achieve communicative goals with an emphasis on outcomes. On the other hand, Willis (1996) noted that there were some tangible examples of two different groups of activities in the classroom, tasks and practising activities:

'In this sense, the following is a language practice activity, not a task, because the focus is on form, not outcome:

Use the question form, 'Did you ever...?' to ask your partner about their childhood.'
(Willis, 1996, p.393)

Skehan (1998a, 1998b, as cited in Ellis, 2018), in a different category, differentiated 'exercise and task' as the following:

<i>Aspects</i>	<i>Exercise</i>	<i>Task</i>
Orientation	Linguistic skills are viewed as pre requisite for learning communicative abilities.	Linguistic skills are developed while engaging in communicative activity.
Focus	Linguistic form and semantic meaning (i.e. primary focus on form).	Propositional content and pragmatic communicative meaning (primary focus on meaning).
Goal	Manifestation of code knowledge.	Achievement of a communicative goal.
Outcome evaluation	Performance is evaluated in terms of conformity to the code.	Performance is evaluated in terms of whether the communicative goal has been achieved
Real-world relationship	Internalization of linguistic skills serves as an investment for future use.	There is a relationship between the activity that arises from the task and the way language is used in the real world.

Figure 2. 1 Differences between exercise and task, Ellis (2018) (p.21).

Nevertheless, Ellis (2018) believed that ‘task’ would have different meanings when different contexts were considered. For example, a task is a ‘*work plan*’ that includes i) some input, which means all of the information that learners will need to assess and use in a real-world context. ii) Some instructions involve outcomes that are considered for learners, and they are supposed to achieve them (p. 7). Ellis also outlines that ‘*task-as-work plan*’ and ‘*task-as-process*’ are not identical, so most definitions involve ‘task-as-work plan’ (p. 7). According to the three applications of language identified by Holliday (1985, as cited by Nunan, 2004) (transactional macro-function for exchanging goods or services, socializing macro-function for interpersonal communication; and enjoyment or aesthetic macro-function), we need to transfer real-world tasks to pedagogical tasks. Nunan (2004) suggested that rehearsal tasks were known as practices for learners to do something they needed outside the classroom. To clarify the matter, he gives an example:

‘Write your resume and exchange it with a partner. Study the positions available advertisements in the newspaper and find three that would be suitable for your partner. Then compare your choices with the actual choice made by your partner.’ (Nunan, 2004, p.20)

‘Pedagogical tasks’ also are introduced by Nunan (2004):

‘You are on a ship that is sinking. You have to swim to a nearby island. You have a waterproof container, but can only carry 20 kilos of items in it. Decide which of the following items you will take. (remember you cannot take more than 20 kilos with you)’ (Nunan, 2004, p.21).

Axe (8 kilos)	Box of novel and magazines (3kilos)
Cans of food (500 grams each)	Packets of sugar, flour, rice, powdered milk, coffee, tea (each packet weights 500 grams)
Bottles of water (1.5 kilos each)	Medical kit (2 kilos)
Short-wave radio (12 kilos)	Portable CD player and CDs (4 kilos)
Fire lightening kits (500 grams each)	Rope (6 kilos)
Notebook computer (3.5 kilos)	Waterproof sheets of fabric (3 kilos each)

Figure 2. 2, An example of pedagogical tasks, Nunan (2004, p.21).

According to his definition, this task is aimed at activating a range of language functions, such as making suggestions, talking about quantity, how much or how many, asking ‘Wh-questions,’ speaking about agreeing or disagreeing, etc., (Nunan, p. 21).

To conclude the concept, Skehan (1998, as cited in Nunan, 2004) suggested five main characteristics of tasks:

- *Meaning is primary.*
- *Learners are not given other people’s meanings to regurgitate.*
- *There is some sort of relationship to comparable real-world activities.*
- *Task completion has some priority.*
- *The assessment of the task is in terms of the outcome’ (Skehan, 1998, p.3).*

On the contrary, Ellis (2021) emphasizes that teaching context and the goals of the curriculum are the most important issues in providing tasks in the syllabi. However, some researchers define ‘task’ by thinking about the educational system in the United Kingdom or the United States, while we need to imagine a country like China or Iran, where most

learners cannot accept the TBLT framework and tasks because of having had explicit teaching for a long time. However, it can be changed when some relevant materials and supports are provided for them.

2.1.2. Complementary Debates about Tasks in Second Language Acquisition (SLA)

Ralph Tyler (1949 as cited in Nunan, 2004, p.4), who is called the ‘father of modern curriculum study’ suggested a ‘rational curriculum model’ that involves purposes and objectives, or a syllabus and task-based language pedagogy that included two dimensions of teaching, i.e., ‘planning and improvising’ were proposed by Van Lier (1988). To align with Van Lier and open the subject best, Nunan (2004) divided the curriculum into terms of ‘the curriculum as a plan’, ‘the curriculum as action’, and ‘the curriculum as an outcome’. The first concept refers to the process and products that are prepared before the instructional process. Plans and syllabi, textbooks, and various resources, besides assessment instruments, are involved in this group. The curriculum as an action plays the role of reality in the classrooms as a planned curriculum is performed, while the curriculum as an outcome includes all of the materials that are learned after employing the instructional process (Nunan, 2004, p. 6).

Nevertheless, Long (2015) disagreed with ‘one size fits all’ as a curriculum in teaching languages. He believed that although some structures, like grammatical structures, might not change over time, many people probably used them in different ways. Therefore, ‘one size fits all’ disregards the important differences in language use, according to various needs and abilities of learners (p. 26). This is outlined by Zarrabi and Brown (2015, p.3491 as cited in Goodarzi et al., 2020) in terms of English teaching and learning in the Iranian context. They believe that ‘one for all recipe’ is a prevalent approach in the course book provided in Iran, but one of the important barriers in contrast to the government’s goals is ignoring the different contexts in deprived areas and privileged cities in Iran that includes

access the Internet or multimedia devices. Torki and Chalak (2017) also mentioned that access to resources and similar teaching methods was not equally considered in all high schools in Iran. The inequality in receiving similar teaching methods comes from a lack of Internet and digital facilities in deprived areas of Iran. In this regard, Ellis (2021) believed that the tension between theoretical content and environmental constraints enforced the syllabus providers and teachers to consider more flexible instruction to have a conformist and radical alternative.

However, arising the productive instructions in task-based language teaching, Willis (1996, as cited in Ellis, 2018) mentioned the components of the instructions as follows:

- 1) *'to give learners confidence in trying out whatever language they know;*
 - 2) *to give learners experience of spontaneous interaction;*
 - 3) *to give learners the chance to benefit from noticing how others express similar meanings;*
 - 4) *to give learners chances for negotiating turns to speak;*
 - 5) *to engage learners in using language purposefully and cooperatively*
 - 6) *to make learners participate in a complete interaction, not just one-off sentences;*
 - 7) *to give learners chances to try out communication strategies; and*
 - 8) *to develop learners' confidence that they can achieve communicative goals.'*
- (Willis, 1996 as cited in Ellis, 2018, pp.31-32).

Ellis also mentioned an interesting point that, of the eight characteristics that were proposed by Willis, only one of them (three) related to second language acquisition and the others involved communicative effectiveness (p. 32). This issue shows that the goal of learning L2 is to make learners able to use and communicate the target language (Ellis, 2018, p. 32), which is achieved by a well-designed curriculum in most contexts.

As previously stated, teaching approaches have evolved over time, and there is undoubtedly more than one approach available, some of which are discussed in greater detail below.

2.2. Presentation, Practice, and Production (P-P-P) approach

The P-P-P approach was developed in the 1970s to contribute to teaching communicative proficiencies in English language classrooms (Le Diem & Newton, 2021). As Richards (2006) argued, P-P-P involved contemporary grammatical and speaking materials that would be introduced by the teachers in the first phase. In the next phase, the student practices the new point in a controlled context provided by the teacher. In addition, the third phase refers to producing the teaching points in real or simulated communication (p. 8). Skehan (1996, p. 18, as cited in Richards, 2006), on the other hand, criticized the P-P-P approach. He believed that the P-P-P approach focused more on automatization and the particular structures that they were taught than on credibility in linguistics (p. 8). Moreover, production or output may force learners to think about syntactic processing rather than semantic processing (Swain, 1985, p. 249, as cited in Willis, 1996, p. 326). As an Asian teacher, I consider automatization and credibility in learning a second language in the Iranian context and the teachers' insight in Iran towards teaching English through the automatization process. Teachers' perceptions of task components and the purpose of arranging the tasks in English textbooks are important to deal with some difficulties in teaching English. Many Asian schools and institutions still prefer to apply presentation-practice-produce (P-P-P) approaches (Tang, 2004; Tong, 2005, as cited in Carless, 2009) and task-based language teaching might not be desirable for all language learners (Mahmoodi, 2015). Interestingly, Sato (2010) like Tong and Mahmoodi, came to similar conclusions about the effectiveness of P-P-P and TBLT approaches in the Japanese-English classroom and claimed that P-P-P was both 'declarative', the knowledge transferred by teachers, and 'procedural', the way learners preferred to use the knowledge in this context. Associated with a successful explanation of the learning process, declarative knowledge is considered to correspond to the cognitive stage, while automatizing procedural knowledge corresponds to the autonomous stage (Anderson, 1995, as cited in Sato, 2010). Therefore, P-P-P from a theoretical perspective can be supported by claims that the starting point of

learning a second language is the explicit teaching of linguistic features and employing declarative knowledge that will be proceduralized and automated through repetition and practice as output (Diem Bui & Newton, 2021) that can be communicative skills.

Figure 2.3 illustrates the indirect role of output or production in language acquisition; so when learners speak in a second language, other people who speak to them are persuaded to give them input, which is a conversation (Krashen, 2003, p. 50).

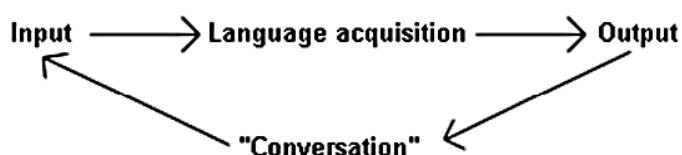


Figure 2. 3, How output or production contributes to language acquisition indirectly (Krashen, 2003.p.50).

2.3. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

The CLT theory appeared to encourage learners to use their second language to achieve communicative competence rather than analyze the structures of the second language (grammatical competence) (Nastir & Sanjaya, 2014). In addition, language is not viewed as a set of formal structures, but communicative competence is the main point in CLT (Ellis, 2018, p. 1). Thus, creating correct sentences grammatically is not the whole purpose of learning in the CLT approach, but using language in different contexts (real life) is the most important preference (Kalanzadeh et al., 2013). In the same vein, Mahmoodi (2015) claimed that learners in Iran inclined to communicative learning rather than generative and structuralist approaches. Similarly, Richards (2006) suggested that fluency was an important aspect of CLT that was developed by designing classroom activities to negotiate meaning, apply communication strategies, discuss misunderstandings, and avoid communication failures (p. 14). Zohrabi et al. (2014) in a comparative study, evaluated the

contents of Interchange 1 (English for international communication) and English Book 1 that was provided for Iranian senior high school students. They claimed that Iranian high school course books were focused on form rather than meaning and fluency and grammar was considered in all sections of the Iranian course books. In addition, Rasti and Nouhi Jadesi (2021) in their study compared two junior and senior high school English course books in Iran in terms of CLT principles and indicated that content providers focused on comprehensive reading, grammar structures, and vocabulary rather than applying knowledge to improve communicative skills. This is obvious from the large body of practices and tasks in terms of learning vocabulary and grammar compared with interactional and interpersonal tasks. Meanwhile, the knowledge of the second language among the students is inadequate for the CLT approach, so they attempt to make themselves understood. Since the dominant role belongs to the acquirers, they are known as being responsible for their learning progression (Freeman & Anderson, 2011, p. 141).

Although the story behind the emergence of CLT involved an opponent of teaching complex grammatical structures, in recent years, this point of view has been considered a challenging issue, and most researchers believed that a focus on form must be taken into account in classrooms to make meaning (Halliday, 1994; Hammond & Derewianka, 2001, as cited in Nunan, 2004, p. 9) while the communicating exercises are arranged (Breen, 1984, as cited in Nunan, 2004). In general, CLT should be a process in which teachers facilitate a communicative perspective in the classroom (Figure 2.4); while he or she plays the role of advisor during the activities, as well as answering questions and monitoring the learners' activities. The instructors should take note of the potential errors made by learners to be considered in other accuracy-based activities (Freeman and Anderson, 2011, p. 141).



Figure 2. 4 Predictions about a strip story by students

After considering the tasks as a lesson arrangement that provides learners with some specific tools to achieve the required communication goals, TBLT emerged (Zeng, 2022).

2.4. Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

TBLT grew out of CLT, and it was applied as a radical alternative to traditional methods of teaching a foreign language (Ellis et al., 2020, p. 21). In addition, TBLT started its work by analyzing task-based requirements to recognize the target tasks for the specific learners; in other words, it is applicable to identify what they need to do in the target language (Long, 2015, p. 6). Similarly, Hismanoglu & Hismanoglu (2011) declared that, according to the constructivist theory of learning and communicative language teaching methodology, TBLT was arisen as a response to some limitations of the P-P-P approach, so many instructors have paid attention to task-based approaches, learner-centered approaches, and communicative tools since the 1980s.

In this respect, Nunan (2006) represented the strengths of TBLT from a pedagogical perspective as the following:

- *'A needs-based approach to content selection*
- *An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language*
- *The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation.*
- *The provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on language, but also on the learning process itself.*
- *An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences is an important contributing element to classroom learning.*
- *The linking of classroom language learning with language use outside the classroom.'* (Nunan, 2006, p.14)

Tasks play a central role in TBLT and define the roles of both instructors and learners.

Nunan (2004) illustrated the basic framework of TBLT (Figure 3).

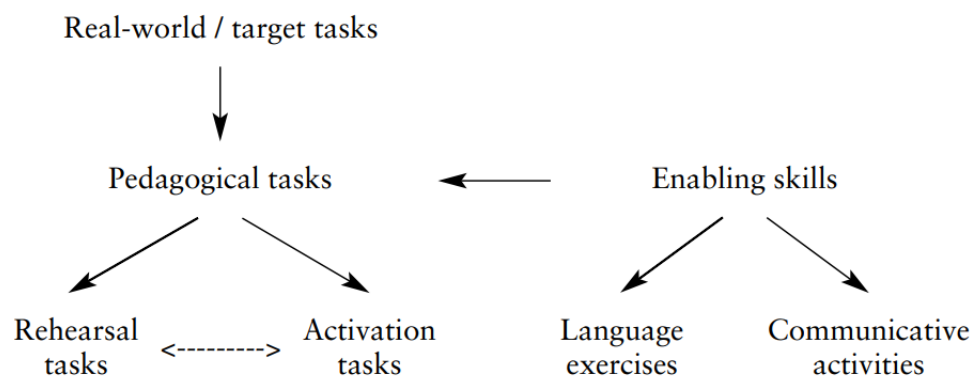


Figure 2. 5 A framework for TBLT

According to Nunan (2004), enabling skills (language exercises and communicative activities) involve form-focused work because they contribute to developing skills and knowledge to facilitate the path of communication. While language exercises focus on lexical, phonological, or grammatical systems, pedagogical tasks aim to improve language proficiency. In a different context, Khalili Sabet et al. (2014) assessed EFL learners' motivation for improving their English writing skills using the TBLT approach in Iran. Since educational practices were strongly rooted in teacher-directed approaches, or PPP teaching approaches, higher motivation in TBLT was reported during their investigation in

relation to considering student-based approaches and making learners responsible for their own learning.

However, the inability of the task-based teaching approach to meet all the needs of different learners involving task assessments was considered a limitation of TBLT by Ellis et al. (2020, p. 20). Furthermore, the emphasis on fluency over accuracy (Foster & Skehan, 1999, as cited in Ji & Li, 2021) and linguistic deficiency, as well as some difficulties participating in tasks, particularly in speaking skills (Ganta, 2015), were mentioned. Learners cannot take part in a task without enough word knowledge. In this regard, new vocabularies and fundamental grammatical features are needed to achieve communicative competence (Ellis, 2020).

Communicative activities in English classrooms and utilizing TBLT are not completely addressed in Iran, because there are some problems in terms of implications and the teachers need to be trained to find how to implement TBLT techniques (Mahdavi-rad, 2017), the size of the classroom and a lack of certain facilities. In the same vein, Kohenen (1992, as cited in Nunan, 2004) found that one of the most important issues in TBLT was to encourage the transformation of knowledge within small or collaborative groups of students rather than transferring materials and knowledge from the teachers to the learners. Amini et al. (2019) analyzed 117 teachers' points of view towards task-based teaching in two different contexts (state high schools and private schools) in Iran. Their results indicated that despite the existence of knowledgeable teachers and a positive attitude toward TBLT, the unfamiliarity of learners with TBLT and large-sized classrooms might result in the avoidance of the implementation of TBLT in Iran. On the other hand, some teachers suffer from a lack of comprehensive training in terms of explaining the new definition of 'teaching' including the role of material developers and teachers as facilitators in the learning of the language (Tomlinson, 2011, p. 3), this is especially true in some Asian countries. Hence, some TBLT teachers, for example, only rely on completing a task and practising the second language while neglecting communicative intent of the tasks

(Careless, 2004, p. 644); however, the Iranian students' interest in some effective tasks in communicative competences such as brainstorming and role-playing as the provoking means of communicative skills were reported by Ghaemi and Hassannejed (2015). Implementing a communicative approach includes employing knowledgeable and fluent teachers, but a shortage of such teachers causes the employment of untrained teachers in the Iranian educational system (Kennedy, 2015, p. 17). Therefore, as Mahdavi-rad (2017) suggested, fear of encountering specific problems in terms of a lack of knowledge or a lack of confidence made teachers step backward in applying TBLT in the Iranian context. However, the researcher summarized that the most vital factors that Iranian learners needed, could be the introduction of implicit knowledge of the language, studying as critical thinkers, and encouraging the students to be confident enough to use communicative and interactive tasks in their real lives. Thus, knowledge achievement, e.g., the outcomes of the learners' activities (Kim, 2010) should not be confined to the classroom and group work.

Shakhsi Dastgahian and Scull (2022) in a recent investigation of reforms in English language teaching in Iran, suggested that the development of professional learning depends on 'insider' and 'outsider' knowledge. They referred to insider facilitators as knowledgeable people with a deep understanding of school culture and context in Iran and outsiders as contributors with new insights and practices that enhanced the value of the teacher's perceptions and experiences. To support this theory, Bloom's taxonomy of higher-level thinking is taken into account which emphasizes critical thinking as a creative activity in a TBLT classroom (Every Student Learn, 2013, p.1). It entails improving the ability to analyze, evaluate and motivate critical thinking (Bloom et al., 1956, p.38) during the teaching process. Bloom et al. (1956) believed that education should foster learners who were able to select an appropriate technique to solve a problem encountered as critical and reflective thinkers. To achieve this skill, previous experiences, and a background of knowledge help learners cope with new situations (p.38).

Arts or skills + knowledge = abilities

The abilities refer to the intellectual abilities and skills that are introduced by the learners' recognition of the need to independently solve problems; they need to solve the problems on their own and make wise decisions based on their own thinking (Bloom, 1956, p.41).

In Iran, however, knowledge is transferred through the syllabus and course books. In addition to the issues mentioned above, Najjari (2014) investigated the theoretical and practical implementation of task-based language teaching in Iran and claimed that enabling skills and the moderated version of textbooks involving communicative-oriented tasks, in addition to methodological innovation, were the most essential priorities among Iranian teachers, institutions, and schools.

2.4.1. Four Essential Factors for Language Learning

Willis (1996) suggested specific basic principles, by which useful classroom tasks and activities, as well as stimulating learning, could be employed. Willis tried to indicate how learners could learn English effectively (p. 11). She believed that three essential conditions were represented by many researchers, regardless of the learners' cognitive styles. Although Willis spoke about the fourth condition, this was not essential (Figure 4).

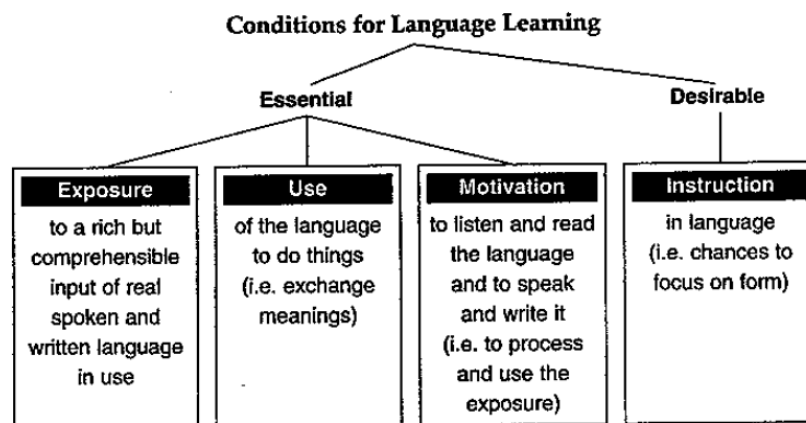


Figure 2. 6 Four conditions for language learning, (Willis, 1996, p.11)

Exposure was considered by other researchers, such as Krashen in a comprehensive discussion, Input Hypothesis, where he mentioned that ‘we acquire meaning first, and as a result, we acquire structure.’ Moreover, he claims that the acquirers need to move from stage ‘i’ to stage ‘i+1’, in which they understand input (i+1), and this process involves the meaning rather than the form of the message (p. 22). Willis (1996) argued that the quality of exposure was more important than the quantity which is an issue advocated by Krashen (1982) in the input theory. Willis (1996) argued for the inclusion of ‘rich’ and ‘real’ in the diagram to avoid introducing a limited diet of simplified or particularly written transcripts, sentence-level patterns, and scripted conversations. In some contexts, like Iran, the same results were collected in a comparative study of English textbooks used in Iranian institutes, so that Iranian students preferred new and rich materials to traditional ones that were provided in state schools (Alavinia & Siyadat, 2013). Alavinia and Siyadat (2013) found that learners were motivated to acquire English skills and knowledge through some innovative methods and authentic materials. In a research study, Ghanbari et al. (2015) concluded that authentic materials could be helpful to motivate learners to improve their language competence and expose them to the real world interactions. Using some language materials with a rich variety of oral and reading text-types, i.e., newspapers, conversations, stories and notes motivate learners to engage in the learning process (Karapetyan & Aslanabadi, 2015). In addition to the innovative approaches and authentic materials,

Shafiniya & Lotfi (2013) claimed that one of the key characteristics of an international English textbook was the quality of a structural syllabus that was spiral, i.e., the materials were presented and reviewed at different stages of learning to ensure a good and acceptable output. But, is a method considered as a significant topic in the teaching process? Bell (2007) suggested that teachers' autonomy had frequently been underestimated by theorists, while teachers had significant credit in this area, and intellectual autonomy and teachers' perception had been underestimated. Each teacher needs to have knowledge of methods to support their interest in methods as a source of options and a framework for eclecticism in the classroom; so they can apply an appropriate method according to the particular teaching context. In addition, he claimed that teachers know whether a method was dead or needed to be abandoned because of some limitations in a specific context (Post-method) as well as their ability to build their own methods or choose appropriate approaches in the teaching process (Bell, 2007).

The second category of conditions for language learning, 'use' includes 'output' (Willis, 1996, p. 13). Input cannot be useful without output, so output is considered a way of practising knowledge that has already existed rather than a way to create knowledge (Gass & Selinker, 2008, p. 326). Kaivanpanah et al. (2020) investigated the effect of input-based and output-based tasks with different and identical involvement loads on incidental vocabulary learning in Iranian EFL learners and found that output-based tasks were primarily facilitative and productive in the Iranian context. These tasks improved students' knowledge in terms of vocabulary learning. In terms of production purposes, Bahrani and Nekoueizadeh (2014) rose some controversial issues related to linguistic input and output, including the type and amount (quantity) of linguistic input required to produce output in an SLA. Language input involves a specific amount of knowledge available to a language learner, which is quite different from language intake, which refers to the portion of input that a learner absorbs (Corder, 1967). Input and output are accepted as the external products while learning is a process encompassing both products and processes; however, intake is more important as the initial stage of learning because learners need to connect form and

meaning, form hypotheses, test them, and finally reject or confirm the practical hypothesis (Leow, 2015), which again confirms Bloom's taxonomy and high-order thinking among learners.

Willis also spoke about the last category, 'instruction' which was not essential because the usefulness of instruction has been questioned for a long time. But she argued that teaching could help students find opportunities to process grammatical structures and predict their use and meaning.

2.5. Task-based Learning vs. Problem-based learning

As mentioned before, 'true learning is based on discovery, guided by mentoring rather than the transmission of knowledge' (Duch et al., 2001, p. 15). Discovery in problem-based learning (PBL) involves learning in which learners try to manage or deal with problems in real life (Sadlo, as cited in Astuti et al., 2014). Montafej et al. (2021) investigated problem-based learning in an EFL context to improve speaking skills and self-confidence among Iranian undergraduate participants, concluding that PBL methods had a positive effect on learners' speaking skills and self-confidence. Similarly, Ansarian et al. (2016) suggested that problem-based learning through cognitive-based tasks significantly affected Iranian learners' oral proficiency. Hmelo-Silver (2004) claimed that learners would deal with the problem better if they produce hypotheses about potential solutions. She added that learners needed to identify knowledge gaps related to a given question in a PBL strategy. Rosyidi (2018) examined the effectiveness of PBL on high school learners and referred to the advantages of applying PBL and the way of discussion, solving the problem approaches, and study with other students which could contribute to teaching critical reading. More recently, to confirm the role of PBL in teaching English, Dharma et al. (2020) evaluated the effectiveness of PBL on output and made claims that PBL could affect critical thinking skills. They suggested that PBL with a phase of providing solutions and drawing

conclusions encouraged critical thinking skills and group learning could also affect critical thinking skills and students' learning outcomes. So, reflective activities are considered to improve them. Likewise, problem-based learning is called an 'activation rationale' that can involve activating the learners' developing language skills (Nunan, 2004).

Therefore, what can differentiate task-based learning (TBL) from problem-based learning (PBL) is the learning issues that will be raised by learners and foster an independent and active learning attitude among them in PBL, while learning issues are prepared by the case writers in TBL (Takahashi, 2008). A research study in Mexico suggested that PBL caused autonomous learning and affected the process of learning among students and teachers' educational practices (Arias, 2011).

According to the factors mentioned above, some research has been conducted in terms of using different strategies and tasks in high school English course books in Iran that have been newly reviewed and published according to the needs of the new generation. Alemi et al. (2020) argued that language competencies had been considered in these course books, while attending to other competencies was neglected. They also added that these texts involved grammatical knowledge, resulting in a lack of real-life communicative engagement. In other research, it was mentioned that TBL and learning with pair-group were accepted by the majority of Iranian EFL teachers, while some teachers avoided this strategy because of some problems that they had in conducting the tasks and practices in the classrooms (Tabatabaei & Hadi, 2011; Ansari & Shahrokhi, 2014; Parvane, 2016; Keramati & Gillies, 2021). Therefore, language learning should be the primary goal, and PBL can act as a mediator, such as tasks in the form of problem-solving mediation in a TBL approach, between the acquirers' existing knowledge and the new knowledge that they learn (Candlin & Murphy, 1987, p.1, as cited in Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011, p.173)

2.6. Summary

There is a widespread belief that learners must deal with form and grammatical structure from the beginning, whereas the prevailing opinion of the researchers and experts reviewed above (Ellis et al., 2020; Ellis, 2021; Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Willis and Willis, 2007; Nunan, 2004; Krashen, 2003), learners must receive appropriate input with various innovative tasks to indicate the comprehensive output (Krashen, 2003, p.vii) in their real lives. While teaching methods prior to the development of the CLT involved output, the CLT provided a syllabus and material providers to outline the learning process (Choi & Nunan, 2018) under the least amount of teachers' control. The most improved strategies, for instance, are taken into account in terms of decreasing the role of teachers and applying different tasks to challenge the learners' abilities to communicate independently.

From the literature reviewed, it is clear that the use of TBLT in Iranian English classrooms depends on a number of different factors and requires strong scaffolding. While the presence of TBLT in Iranian course books and among instructors' teaching methods is a contentious issue in Iran (Shakhsi Dastgahian & Scull, 2022), an evaluation of Iranian textbooks is required to clarify the structure of these textbooks and the teachers' perspectives on them (Mahdavi-rad, 2017; Jamalvandi, 2014). The main rationale for conducting this study was to evaluate teachers' outcomes based on various aspects of task-based materials and to reflect teachers' perceptions of Iranian English course books to enhance appropriate stimuli for learning L2.

Many studies have recently been published that examine the content of course books in Iran. They suggest that teachers should be trained in terms of TBLT (Shakhsi Dastgahian & Scull, 2022), and content providers also need to think about some modifications to course books and applicable tasks (Alemi et al., 2021). Pirzad et al. (2021) evaluated the textbooks in Iranian schools and outlined the limitations of the tasks for real communication and the positive attitude of teachers towards using these tasks in the textbooks. In the same vein, Gordani (2010) believed that English textbooks in Iran gave priority to grammar-based learning and lower levels of cognitive skills, so that teaching

other skills and communicative competencies was neglected. Although most instructors are aware of the essence of TBLT as it appears in Iranian high school course books, they are not sufficiently informed about the methods and characteristics of a practical syllabus or aspects of task-based materials as well. Thus, the objective and subjective needs of learners have not been considered for a long time. There is a gap in the literature in terms of meaningful insights into task-based provision and authentic improvement; therefore, the dimensions of tasks are taken into account by analyzing goals, input data, classroom settings, activity types, and activity themes (Nunan, 2004). This study will consider new ground in the development of communicative materials by examining aspects of task-based materials and learners' performance in Iranian high school course books. There is no specific research in Iran to deal with this domain of SLA in English classrooms and course books.

This study aims to investigate whether the curriculum in the English course books in Iran contains task-based materials. To achieve this purpose, in addition to analyzing English textbooks, according to Nunan's theory of Different Strategy Types of Tasks (1999), teachers, according to Nunan's theory of task components (1989) will also participate in this study. They play a role in sharing their experiences of teaching English textbooks in Iran and presenting their perceptions of task-based materials in Iranian high school textbooks. This chapter included a brief overview of Task, TBLT, PPP, and CLT. This chapter also included a review of the literature and previous studies in this area, TBLT, and some other important discussions on instructive approaches. Exploring the scaffolding of TBLT and related approaches in English language teaching provided a dynamic and important foundation for conducting the present study. Therefore, evaluating and analyzing the content of Iranian course books and clarifying the areas where effectiveness is compromised by teachers' perceptions contributes to improving the problematic areas of Iran's high school curriculum. In order to conduct this analysis, the researcher needs to further discuss the major issues in this area in the next chapter.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

3.1. Introduction

The research method is introduced and described in this chapter. In addition, the purpose of the study and the research questions will be disclosed. The current chapter covers the research context, research design, theoretical approach, participants, ethical considerations, tools for data collection, and data analysis. At the end of this chapter, ethical considerations will be taken into account.

3.2. The research context

The current research was conducted in seven private schools and institutions in a city in the southwest of Iran. Since most Iranians speak Persian, English is one of the most important languages as L2 in Iran, followed by Arabic, French, and Turkish. Three schools were selected in the present study, and more respondents needed to be recruited from other private schools and institutions. Some private schools, in Iran, have an entrance exam where the teachers teach learners many other complementary books in addition to the usual textbooks. The teachers in the high schools are those who have more than eight years of experience in teaching the selected textbooks (Vision 1, 2, and 3). Most private and state high schools have a predetermined EFL curriculum and textbooks. To provide English textbooks in high schools in Iran, four macro-skills are considered: listening, writing, speaking, and reading. Because these textbooks primarily aim to assist students in preparing for university entrance exams and learning form rather than meaning, analyzing them contributes to improving or justifying the necessary materials to promote directed and relevant learning.

In terms of current methods in the Iranian educational system, a main inquiry among most teachers and researchers is ‘Why are students, after seven years of learning English in the state or public schools and private schools, unable to deal with the simplest meanings and speaking?’ (Salehi & Amini, 2016). As an outlined issue in terms of learning second languages, a picture of achieved communicative competence compared to the willingness to communicate is discussed (Dörnyei, 2003). Communicative competence is developed when learners can produce connected speech, speak in different contexts, and engage in interactive activities (Lindsay & Knight, 2006, as cited in Soodmand Afshar & Asakereh, 2016). Since communicative competencies in Iranian schools involve some short dialogues to explain language functions and a poor understanding of the nature of conversational interaction, after graduation from high school, minimal communicative competencies are expected (Sadeghi & Richards, 2015). However, communicative competence will be achieved when the willingness to communicate is improved as well. Many competent learners avoid L2 communication situations, while less proficient students actively try to find opportunities to engage in L2 conversations (Dörnyei, 2003). In the same vein, Aliakbari et al. (2016) evaluated the willingness to communicate among 194 EFL Iranian students and found that communicative competence was the strongest predictor of willingness to communicate in private schools and institutions in Iran.

The curriculum and English textbooks have been greatly changed in terms of revising the content of the textbooks and the practical learning process. However, the setting for teaching English has been determined in classrooms without Internet access or computer laboratories, where students could focus on listening skills, phonology, and lexical activities or be exposed to appropriate materials on YouTube and other specific research articles. Currently, the new course books aim at making the materials more communicative than before. As can be seen from the basis of providing the English textbooks, the syllabus includes the following factors:

- *'The main four skills of the English language (speaking, listening, reading, and writing)*
- *Applying the different tasks for a better learning process*
- *Focus on learning L2 through language experiences.*
- *Utilizing the textbooks' rich, understandable, and useful content*
- *Encourage the students to engage in group work and tasks.*
- *Giving appropriate feedback on the learners' responses'* (Alavimoghadam et al., 2021).

A few years ago, there was a supervisory and preparatory program, the pre-university program, where students had to graduate after about a year of study. Currently, according to the predetermined educational program and syllabus of the high schools in Iran, there are three levels of English course books in state and private high schools in order to prepare students for further academic courses in universities.

3.2.1. Teachers' Qualifications

Regarding teachers and their proficiency, the researchers have to discuss some conditions and qualifications teachers in Iran need to consider. There is a specific university where the diploma students are trained as new teachers and professors after passing the national level university exam. They obtain the essential experience and knowledge to teach English or other subjects in Iranian schools. They must be experts in English teaching skills, advising students on how to practice the activities of the work books in the classroom, and managing the classroom throughout their academic course at this university. Around ten years ago, the TBLT approach in Iran could not be performed extensively because there were different challenges in this regard, e.g., a lack of experience in TBLT among the teachers, a large number of students who attended in a classroom (approximately 25–30 students in each classroom), and the existence of some deficits in the management of the task-based language teaching. Although teacher training and academic education exclude particular teaching methods, some considered workshops encourage teachers to apply

applicable methods of teaching and make them acquainted with the TBLT approach. Therefore, all teachers need to achieve a good level of proficiency to apply the TBLT approach, according to the curricular framework of English textbooks, so the current study and EFL learners definitely benefit from it. On the other hand, the methodology of the current study is designed to examine the English course books in Iranian high schools through a particular model (Nunan, 1989). The purpose of the study is to provide a descriptive framework involving task components and analyze the current status of the course books in terms of TBLT.

3.2.2. Rationale for TBLT

As Ellis et al. (2020) suggest, there are some reasons to shed light on the necessity of TBLT in the current curricula around the world. The first rationale is to search in the SLA area, as Long (1985, as cited in Ellis et al., 2020) argues that a group of discrete linguistic or sociolinguistic teaching areas is not the best method to present the target language. He refers to tasks as an integrated solution to syllabus and methodological issues as well (p. 79). The second rationale is general educational principles (Candlin, 1987; Breen, 1989, as cited in Ellis et al., 2020). Traditional learning approaches involve exposing students to grammar and forms of language, which leads to conscious knowledge of the second language and rules (Krashen, 1989, as cited in East, 2021, p. 26). Candlin (1987) claims that using tasks in teaching a second language encourages students to become more aware of their personalities and social roles in society (p. 17). The third issue is the lack of structural-based teaching and the introduction of grammatical competence as a means of dealing with communication practices, as mentioned by Prabhu (1987, as cited in East, 2021, p. 26) in specific teaching contexts. He critiques the systematization of language input or increasing the planned practices in teaching L2 and encourages the provided conditions involving communication challenges (p. 1). And the last rationale, according to

Nunan (1989), refers to applying ‘task’ as a part of the syllabus, which is what learners learn, and ‘methodology’ that is included in how they learn.

Regarding the rationale mentioned above, there have been many critiques and challenges since the first time that Prabhu, in 1987, proposed a complete account of the task-based course and answered the question, ‘How to design tasks?’ To achieve the best approaches for teaching, researchers need to be aware of the pros and cons of all approaches and shed light on all aspects of them. Traditional approaches also needed to be argued in terms of educational goals, self-realization, self-fulfillment, and self-confidence. The most important issue that is sometimes overlooked in different backgrounds is the ability of a performance-based communicative curriculum, as defined by Van Ek (1977, as cited in Nunan, 2004).

“. . . tries to specify foreign language ability as a skill rather than knowledge. It analyzes what the learner will have to be able to do in the foreign language and determines only in the second place what language-forms (words, structures, etc.) the learners will have to be able to handle in order to do all that has been specified.” (Van Ek, 1977, p.5)

3.3. Overall Research design

The present study involved a mix of qualitative and quantitative approaches to examine the substantial considerations for communicative materials in the Iranian high school course books, Vision 1, 2, and 3 for tenth grade. From an ontological perspective, the current study used an interpretive paradigm to answer the research questions, as interpretivists suggested that research questions arising from a social context should be answered through the people’s perceptions (Thomas, 2017, p. 193). The researcher attempted to focus on subjective and personal interpretations of the issue as well as objective aspects based on factual data. Interviews with the survey and discourse analysis could not be employed as a

mixed methods of the study because of the limited time of conducting the research and Iranian teachers in Iran. So, the researcher decided to apply positivist paradigm, i.e., questionnaires and discourse analysis to achieve the purposes of the study. The primary goal of the study was to collect and analyze quantitatively the perceptions and insights of teachers who shared their teaching experience via a questionnaire and also conducting a qualitative analysis on the given course books. Discourse analysis in this regard was conducted through a checklist adopted from Nunan (2004) to analyze the content and printed texts to quantify the contents in a systematic and replicable manner (Bryman, 2012, p. 280). In addition, to achieve indicators and graphs, closed-ended questions were provided to collect the data about the phenomenon, systematically using standard measures and statistical analysis (Ahmad et al., 2019). To simplify the analysis, numerical and statistical data were extracted from the closed-ended questionnaire (structured questionnaire) to provide the researcher with specified data (Kothari, 2004, p. 101). So, in this regard, mixed methods, quantitative and qualitative data were the best way to achieve the purpose of this study, e.g. providing intuitions and understanding of the problem setting (Ahmad et al., 2019). Nunan (2004) developed a questionnaire that was used in the current study to evaluate task-based materials and learners' performance in English classrooms. In the first stage, high school teachers (N = 35) received and completed the questionnaire involving task components and their perceptions of the course books in Iran. In addition, in the second stage, the researcher analyzed the three textbooks (the Visions series for Iranian high schools) according to the components in the checklist provided by Nunan (1989, 2004). To clarify the extent of considering TBLT in Iranian course books, quantitative data was used after collecting the questionnaires. The research methods were employed to explore a broader understanding of the status of Iranian English course books in high schools in order to address the research questions.

RQ1: Are task-based materials and language performance conducted as part of the curriculum in English course books in Iran?

RQ2: To what extent are task-based materials and language performance employed in high schools in Iran, (according to Nunan's (1989) theory of task components)?

To achieve this purpose, the following stages were addressed:

- Evaluation of the place of task-based material and performance in Iranian textbooks in high schools according to the theory provided by Nunan (1999, 2004).
- An investigation of the teachers' perceptions of the Iranian English textbook syllabus and task-based language teaching in Iran was conducted using a questionnaire adopted from Nunan's theory of task components (Nunan, 1989, 2004).

3.4. Reliability, Validity, and Trustworthiness in Qualitative and Quantitative Research

The validity of a measure refers to how well it assesses and how well the instrument performs (Thomas, 2017, p. 361). In addition, content validity is obtained by experts to facilitate validation with the judgmental approach (Taherdoost, 2016). Although the checklist and the questionnaire were adopted from Nunan's typology (1999, 2004), the classification of the checklist and the questions of the questionnaire were double-checked by three experts who were professors in Iranian universities and had enough experience in this area to be assured of the validity of the research instruments. Moreover, reliability is the accuracy of the applied instrument in a research study (Heale & Twycross, 2015). Reliability, in general, refers to the possibility of consistently measuring something and giving the researcher the same results on different occasions (Thomas, 2017, p. 362). To obtain the internal reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha was applied. The Cronbach's alpha results should be obtained between 0 and 1, so a score of 0.7 and higher

is considered acceptable reliability (Heale & Twycross, 2015). The Cronbach's alpha was calculated for all categories of the questionnaire, e.g., goals (.748), input (.754), setting (.821), task types (.773), and task themes (.872), and they were acceptable indexes. To ensure the reliability of the qualitative analysis of the discourse analysis, the researcher randomly selected one lesson from each textbook and sent it to two university professors for separate analysis. To obtain the consistency of the data, some controversial domains were discussed, and agreement on the raw data was attained and applied to all task subscales in other chapters. Deductive coding was used to analyze the English course books in Iran in accordance with the checklist and examples of tasks that were extracted from Nunan's (2004) typology. All categories of the tasks were provided with an appropriate example that helped the researcher and three other colleagues code the tasks in the textbooks. This table is represented in Appendix 2.

3.5. Selection of Participants

Purposive sampling is a non-probability form of sampling that was used to select the participants (Bryman, 2012, p. 418), so that all participants needed to have at least 8 years of experience teaching in high schools, have graduated from the specific universities for training teachers, or have gained similar degrees and qualifications. According to the research design, the researcher sent an invitation email to the institutions and private schools in Iran to ask the directors of schools and teachers to attend this study. Thirty-five teachers (males and females) were selected according to their experience (more than eight years). Their ages ranged from 29 to 50, and most of them had experience teaching either in public high schools or private institutions. In addition, this study needed teachers with more than eight years of teaching experience who were trained in the same teaching program at the university. A three-month period, August to November 2022, was considered to gather the data. In the questionnaire, the researcher mentioned that writing

personal information was not obligatory; therefore, numbers were used to name the teachers.

Table 3. 1 Profile of participants

Name	Gender	Experience	Qualification	Position
T1	Male	21 years	BA teaching	English teacher in state schools
T2	Male	12 years	BA teaching	English teacher in state schools
T3	Female	9 years	BA teaching	English teacher in private and state schools
T4	Female	12 years	BA teaching	English teacher in state schools
T5	Female	19 years	MA teaching	English teacher in state schools
T6	Female	9 years	BA teaching	English teacher in state schools
T7	Female	8 years	BA teaching	English teacher in state schools
T8	Male	13 years	MA teaching	English teacher in state schools and private schools
T9	Female	13 years	BA teaching	English teacher in state schools
T10	Female	20 years	BA teaching	English teacher in state schools
T11	Female	11 years	MA teaching	English teacher in state schools and private schools
T12	Male	25 years	BA teaching	English teacher in state schools and private schools
T13	Female	9 years	BA teaching	English teacher in state schools
T14	Male	10 years	BA teaching	English teacher in state schools
T15	Male	9 years	BA teaching	English teacher in state schools and private schools
T16.	Female	8 years	BA teaching	English teacher in state schools
T17	Female	11 years	BA teaching	English teacher in state schools and private schools
T18	Male	9 years	BA teaching	English teacher in state schools
T19	Female	9 years	BA teaching	English teacher in private schools
T20	Male	15 years	MA teaching	English teacher in private schools
T21	Male	9 years	BA teaching	English teacher in state schools
T22	Female	13 years	BA teaching	English teacher in state schools
T23	Male	16 years	MA teaching	English teacher in private schools

<i>T24</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>13 years</i>	<i>MA teaching</i>	<i>English teacher in state schools</i>
<i>T25</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>11 years</i>	<i>BA teaching</i>	<i>English teacher in state schools</i>
<i>T 26</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>18 years</i>	<i>BA teaching</i>	<i>English teacher in state schools and private schools</i>
<i>T27</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>9 years</i>	<i>MA teaching</i>	<i>English teacher in state schools</i>
<i>T28</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>17 years</i>	<i>MA teaching</i>	<i>English teacher in state schools</i>
<i>T29</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>10 years</i>	<i>BA teaching</i>	<i>English teacher in state schools</i>
<i>T 30</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>18 years</i>	<i>BA teaching</i>	<i>English teacher in state schools</i>
<i>T31</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>9 years</i>	<i>BA teaching</i>	<i>English teacher in state schools and private schools</i>
<i>T32</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>15 years</i>	<i>BA teaching</i>	<i>English teacher in state schools</i>
<i>T33</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>8 years</i>	<i>BA teaching</i>	<i>English teacher in state schools</i>
<i>T34</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>19 years</i>	<i>BA teaching</i>	<i>English teacher in state schools</i>
<i>T35</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>11 years</i>	<i>BA</i>	<i>English teacher in state schools and private schools.</i>

Regarding Table 3.1, the participants have different profiles, such as age, years of experience, the schools where they teach, and their qualifications.

3.5. Ethical considerations

BERA (British Educational Research Association) (2018) was used to protect the rights of the participants. The researcher provided the consent letter in English and Persian to make sure all points of the consent were clear to all participants. Appendices 6 and 7 contain copies of the consent letters in accordance with the University of Wales Trinity Saint David ethical confirmation.

3.5.1. Consent Letter

According to BERA (British Educational Research Association) (2018), the researcher sent an email including the invitation letter and consent letter to the directors of the high schools and after receiving the confirmation email, all participants were invited to participate in

this study by an email involving an information sheet with two separate parts (Form 1 and Form 2, Appendices 8 & 9). The first part was the purpose and procedure of the study, and the second part of the form was an invitation to participate. At the end of this form, all participants were invited to request further information about every step of this study. Informed consent (Appendix 6) was also sent to all teachers who participated in this study.

3.5.2. Withdrawal from the Study, Confidentiality, and Anonymity

The invitation letter reminded all participants that they had the right to withdraw from this study at any stage. The researcher also needed to avoid acting against confidentiality while gathering data. No names, addresses, or personal information would be shared with others during all steps of the research or in the final version of the study. Anonymity was considered to help protect privacy. The researcher mentioned that the participants could leave some questions unanswered (e.g., their name, the name of the institution, and their sex). The data were gathered securely using a password-protected computer to protect it from the researcher's computer. The list of participants was provided with a specific identifier to ensure confidentiality and anonymity. The list has also been kept in a password-protected Excel file. Finally, all data would be destroyed after the study's completion.

3.5.3. Debriefing Participants

Participants were thanked for taking part in the survey and were debriefed before answering the questionnaire. They were informed of the intentions of conducting the study. In addition, they were assured that they could ask any questions concerning the questionnaire's layout before and during the study.

3.6. Data Collection

Qualitative research was a part of this study that contained an in-depth understanding of social issues and subjects in their natural setting. In this study, we needed to focus on ‘why’ rather than ‘what’ by which the direct experiences of the researcher became meaningful agents in everyone’s life (Ahmad, 2019). While the quantitative approach contributed to gathering the statistical data (numbers, percentages, and measurable figures) and allowing for the simplification of the analyses and generalization of the results (Daniel, 2016), So, applying qualitative data to explore the place of task-based materials and performance in the course books and a quantitative approach to gathering the data in terms of the teacher’s perception were the most appropriate approaches to address the questions of the study because the researcher needed to evaluate the existence and quality of tasks used in Iranian course books.

A questionnaire and a typology, both adopted from Nunan’s task component theory and task types (1989, 1999), were used for collecting data according to the purpose of the study. To develop a comprehensive examination of the research questions, qualitative data were used to explain quantitative statistical data as an explanatory sequential design (Creswell, 2014, p. 146). Open-ended and close-ended questionnaire surveys are the most common tools to elicit the participants’ perceptions about an issue. So, in a quantitative study, well-designed, closed-ended questionnaires such as rating-scaled questionnaires involved collecting the intended information by managing each question carefully (Wang et al., 2006). Participants could easily analyze the scales of the responses and saved time by pre-scaling answers to the questionnaire. In quantitative research, the researcher could show the generated claims about a group of people's insights, opinions, and behavior (the population of a study) based on data collected from the population (McGuirk & O'Neill, 2016). The questionnaire was answered and rated on a 5-point Likert scale with five

options: (1) strongly disagree; (2) disagree; (3) neither agree nor disagree; (4) agree, and (5) agree strongly.

As it was mentioned before, to collect data for the study, the task component theory and a typology developed by Nunan (1989, 1999) based on ‘characteristics of tasks’ and ‘task types’ with five categories of each, were utilized. The task component theory consisted of five separate components. i) objectives; ii) input; and iii) types of tasks or activities iv) the classroom environment; v) task or activity themes. The first part, e.g., goals, focused on the general objectives behind the learning tasks and activities, and they were known as a link between the task and the broader curriculum. According to Nunan (1989), input involved verbal, written, and visual data that learners needed to work with to complete the tasks. There are three general classifications of activity types suggested by Prabhu: information gap activity, reasoning gap activity, and opinion gap activity (1987, as cited in Nunan, 2004). Activity themes involve acquirers’ requirements, interests, and abilities, and the classroom setting includes arrangements, such as practicing in pairs, separated, and in small groups.

However, task typology involved five categories: (i) cognitive tasks, (ii) interpersonal tasks, (iii) linguistic tasks, (iv) affective tasks, and (v) creative tasks, which are discussed in detail in the data analysis section. The analysis, including the data for the analysis stage, was taken from high school textbooks (the Vision series). These textbooks were published by the Department of Educational Planning and Research in Iran. The flexibility of the qualitative approach allowed the researcher to select and examine all tasks in textbooks with reference to the purpose behind the tasks and what the learner was expected to do. Deep descriptive results were provided from this analysis stage, which serve as a supplement to further quantitative findings.

3.7. Data analysis

To address the data collection process, the following datasets were provided: i) all completed questionnaires as raw data; and ii) Nunan's typology checklist transcripts. All task types in the qualitative phase of the study were extracted and analyzed in the second phase of the study through the task typology developed by Nunan (1999).

The present study used task typology and analyzed the textbooks, according to the categories in this typology to answer the first question of the study. The first phase was reading deeply, transcribing, and extracting the different tasks from the student books and workbooks. Each transcription and its task parts were examined to search for the existence of task types. A classification according to Nunan's typology (1999) was conducted to identify the different task types in the Iranian course books. The researcher needed to find out whether Iranian course books included task-based materials, so the types and frequency of the tasks needed to be evaluated. As Nunan (1999) notes, tasks include five main categories of macro-tasks: a) cognitive, b) interpersonal, c) linguistic, d) affective, and e) creative tasks. There are some micro-tasks (sub-categories of macro-tasks) that Nunan (1999) mentioned that are provided in the following table, Table, 3.2, to apply to answering the first research question.

Table 3. 2 Task types adopted from Nunan (1999, 2004)

Cognitive Tasks	Interpersonal tasks	Linguistics tasks	Affective tasks	Creative tasks
Classifying	Co-operating	Conversational pattern	Personalizing	Brainstorming
Predicting	Role playing	Practicing	Self-evaluating	
Inducing		Using context		
Taking notes		Summarizing		
Concept mapping		Selective listening		
Inferencing		Skimming		
Discriminating				
Diagramming				

To examine task-based materials as a part of the curriculum in English course books in Iran, the details of macro- and micro-tasks were needed. In Table 2, all sub-categories used to analyze the English course books are summarized.

Table 3. 3 Brief explanations of sub-categories of macro-task proposed by Nunan (2004)

Cognitive Tasks	
<i>Classifying</i>	Arranging similar things in groups
<i>Predicting</i>	Predicting what follows in the learning process
<i>Inducing</i>	Looking for patterns and rules for forming a specific structure.
<i>Taking note</i>	Writing down and outlining the important parts of a text in your own words
<i>Concept mapping</i>	Showing the main ideas and information of a text as a map.
<i>Inferencing</i>	Using what you know to learn the new materials
<i>Discriminating</i>	Differentiating the main idea and supporting information.
<i>Diagramming</i>	Preparing a diagram and label it using information from a text.
Interpersonal Tasks	
<i>Co-operating</i>	Work in small groups to share ideas and learning points with other learners.
<i>Role-playing</i>	Imagining someone such as a reporter and playing the situation using the language.
Linguistic Tasks	

<i>Conversational patterns</i>	Being able to use expressions to begin a conversion and carrying it on.
<i>Practicing</i>	Taking part in controlled exercises to improve knowledge and skills.
<i>Using context</i>	Finding and guessing the meaning of unknown phrases and words using the context.
<i>Summarizing</i>	Summarizing the most important points in a text.
<i>Selective listening</i>	Listening and pick out key information rather than understanding every word.
<i>Skimming</i>	Get a general and main idea of a text in a reading task
Affective Tasks	
<i>Personalizing</i>	Sharing your own ideas, feelings and opinions about a specific subject
<i>Self-evaluating</i>	Rating your learning progress
<i>Reflecting</i>	Finding the best way of learning for yourself.
Creative Tasks	
<i>Brainstorming</i>	Working in a group and reflecting as many new words and phrases as you can.

As previously stated, cognitive tasks are strategies that involve ‘learners’ interacting with and manipulating what is to be learned (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011, p. 215). Interpersonal tasks aim to socialize with others and improve language skills (Nunan, 2004, p. 19). Littlewood (1981, p. 6; as cited in Nunan, 2004, p. 9) believes that learners need to learn new items as part of linguistic tasks within a communicative system. However, affective tasks play a role in identifying some of the challenges of the task (East, 2021, p. 93) and in self-evaluating. In addition, creative tasks involve reuniting familiar elements, words, and structures in new ways (Nunan, 2004, p. 37).

3.7.1. Classifying the Course Books' Tasks

Regarding the five categories of task typology, the researcher encountered a set of explanations and characteristics that formed the main scaffolding for the final analysis. The purpose of this analysis was to classify and identify the task types and the objects behind the tasks, so that the researcher could discuss the results related to the research questions. Four categories of tasks were identified in the Iranian course books: comprehensive reading, grammar learning, listening and speaking, and writing skills. After tabulating the

macro-skills in the course books, the researcher identified and classified the micro-tasks with specific characteristics provided by the materials providers. This stage also involved reading the student's books, workbooks, and teacher's books; transcription, tabulation, and identifying the task types of the selected textbooks. After the initial analysis, the quantitative phase of analysis was conducted, which contained descriptive and inferential statistics related to the provided tables and checklists. To answer the first research question involving the existence of task-based materials, the frequency and percentage of task-based materials were taken into account. The different examples of the tasks in Iranian textbooks were also mentioned (Appendices 4 &5). The three experts (teachers with more than nine years of experience teaching in high school) evaluated and rated the tasks separately. After rating the tasks, all the problems and controversies are sorted through discussion, and the discrepancies were resolved in order to achieve an agreement and integrate the results. All tables extracted from the analysis were fed into SPSS to explain the percentage and frequency of the task-based material in the textbooks.

3.7.2. Questionnaire Compilation based on the Task Component Model

The second stage involved completing a survey questionnaire (Nunan, 2004; Appendix 1) by teachers who taught in private institutions and schools in Iran (N = 35) involving their perspectives on tasks and TBLT in the high school course books syllabus. The second question contributed to exploring teachers' thoughts and rationales, including their perception of task components in the course books. This question was a scaffold for reflecting teachers' perceptions about the curriculum and course book content and the quality of different tasks in SLA in Iran.

Materials, in general, refer to anything by which the learners' knowledge or experience of the language will be increased, e.g., videos, DVDs, grammar books, workbooks, dictionaries, etc. (Tomlinson, 2011, p. 2). In addition, authentic materials contribute to

overcoming the typical problem among students of not transferring what they learn to the outside world (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011, p. 146). However, Nunan (2004) uses the term ‘pedagogical tasks’ rather than ‘tasks’ in his book because pedagogical tasks involve communicative language use and learners focus on meaning rather than grammatical forms (p. 4). In ‘task component theory’, he believes that the conceptualizations of task components contribute to designing the tasks in a useful way and help students communicate by applying second language skills beyond the classroom. This theory was chosen as the best-known set of tasks to explore the second research question behind conducting this study. Regarding a valuable framework to analyze task-based materials in Iranian textbooks, Nunan’s model (1989, 2004) was proposed. Fig. 5 shows the scheme of Nunan’s ‘task components’ model:

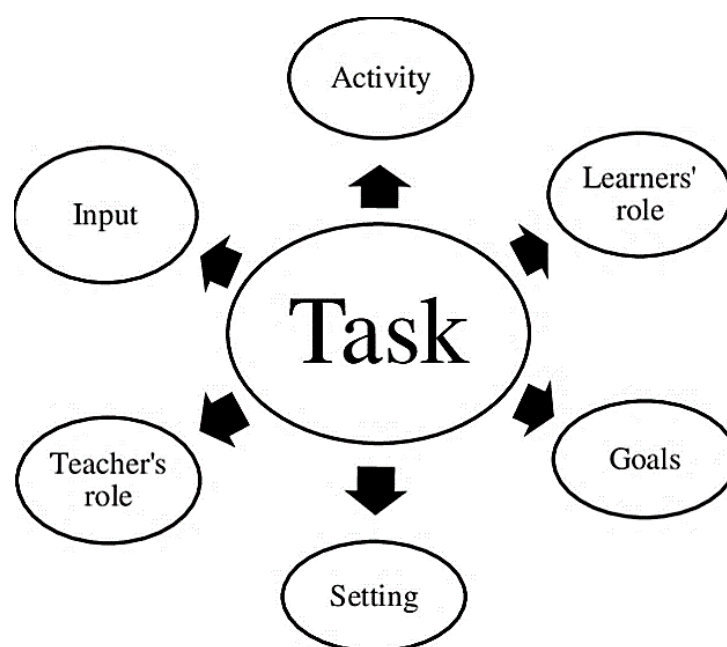


Figure 3. 1 The simple model of task components adopted from Nunan (2004)

Nunan (2004) argues the systematic components of tasks, such as goals, inputs, procedures, task types, teacher and learner roles, and setting. Briefly, teachers may have different

responses to this question: ‘Why are the learners undertaking a particular task?’ according to the ‘goals’ factor in TBLT. Moreover, tasks can play the role of input-based tasks or output-based tasks. According to the former term, learners process the oral or written materials and indicate what they understand, such as by making a model or drawing a picture. While the latter involves speaking and writing to learners to encourage them to achieve the task outcome (Ellis et al., 2020, p.12). Procedures are the steps that learners will take to complete their tasks and achieve their goals. In addition, different task types or activity types involve different types of tasks, such as questions and answers, role play, communication strategies, matching activities, puzzles, problems, and so on. Teachers and learners are expected to play roles in carrying out learning tasks, and the place where these tasks are conducted is a ‘setting’ involving the classroom arrangements or some other places outside the classrooms. Table 2 includes a brief explanation of the dimensions of the tasks developed by Nunan (2004).

Table 3. 4, Dimensions of the tasks

Goals	Goals may include general outcomes e.g., communicative, affective or cognitive or may explain instructors or learner's behavior. Interpersonal relations and the exchange information, ideas, attitudes and feelings are some examples of communicative goals. Cognitive goals involve classifying, predicting, concept mapping discriminating and other purposes. While affective goals refer to personalizing the subject, self-evaluating and reflecting (thinking about the best ways of learning).
Inputs	All materials that are presented by teachers, textbooks or some other sources such as articles, reports, radio and TV scripts, short stories and so on. Inputs may be defined as 'verbal and non-verbal' materials while verbal materials involve spoken or written language and non-verbal materials include pictures, diagrams, maps, etc. (Jeon, 2005).
Task types	According to Bangalore project, three task types are: information gap, reasoning gap, and opinion gap. Information gap generally includes decoding and encoding of information into or from language such as completing a table with available and relevant information (Nunan, 2004). Actually, there are a vast range of task types that all learners are able to deal with learning English process through them.
Task theme	Themes contribute to providing flexible topics and wide variety of contents according with the learners' need. Content can be prepared with different subjects on the school curriculum, for instance, science, math, geography or history.
Setting	Setting includes two important factors: mode and environment. The former, refers to learners' operation individually or group-based, while latter involves the place where the learning takes place (inside or outside the classroom).

Another part of the data analysis was the collection of the questionnaires and the compilation of the respondents' answers. Ordinal data (ranked data) were collected that indicated the strength of attitudes toward the topic under study. Thus, the raw data were linked to the final discussion and decisions and must be converted into percentages and graphs to produce the most accurate results. In addition, the researcher focused on generalization to be achieved through a quantitative approach. SPSS software, version 23.00, was used to analyze the data obtained from the structured questionnaire. Descriptive statistics and mean values of the raw data were provided to facilitate further explanation of the results and findings section.

3.8. Summary

This chapter described the methodology of data collection, including a questionnaire and checklist based on the task typologies adopted by Nunan (1989, 1999). The population of the study consisted of a group of thirty-five experienced teachers, and the context of the study was three private Iranian high schools in Boroujen (southwestern Iran). Ethical considerations were taken into account according to the BERA guidelines (2018) in the United Kingdom. Textbooks were analyzed qualitatively using a typology and a checklist and quantitatively using a closed-ended (structured) questionnaire. The purpose of this chapter was to explain the research process, and the next chapter summarizes the findings and results of the analysis.

Chapter Four

Results

4.1. Introduction

The preceding chapter described the details of the methodology employed to carry out the study. This chapter presents the results of the data analysis, that was performed in relation to the two research questions of the current study: (a) Are task-based materials and language performance conducted as part of the curriculum in the English course books in Iran? (b) To what extent are task-based materials and language performance employed in high schools in Iran (according to Nunan's (1989) theory of task components)? Data were collected, and frequencies were determined for the different items in the checklist and the questionnaire. Then, for each item in the checklist and questionnaire, a Chi-square test for goodness-of-fit was performed to determine the possible differences between Vision 1, Vision 2, and Vision 3 with regard to Nunan's framework, and a one-sample *t*-test was performed to examine the significance of the respondents' attitudes toward the different subsections of Nunan's questionnaire on good learning tasks.

4.3. Types of Activities (tasks) in the Vision Book Series

The first aim of the analysis was to identify the task and activity types in the course books used in Iranian high schools according to Nunan's typology (2004). A general overview of the organization and arrangement of task types in Vision 1, Vision 2, and Vision 3 is presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4. 1 Organization of task types in the *Vision* book series

<i>Name of the book</i>	<i>Number of lessons/sections</i>	<i>Number of tasks</i>
Vision 1	4 lessons/ 8 sections	152
Vision 2	3 lessons/ 10 sections	111
Vision 3	3 lessons/ 9 sections	104

According to Table 4.1, *Vision 1* included 4 lessons, and each lesson contained 8 sections. The total number of activities and tasks in this book was 152. Similarly, *Vision 2* had three lessons, ten sections, and 111 tasks in total. In addition, in *Vision 3*, the number of lessons was 3 with 9 sections. This book included 104 tasks and activities.

According to data analysis, *Vision1* included cognitive tasks (classifying, predicting, inducing, and inferring diagraming) while three sub-categories (i.e., taking note, concept mapping, and discriminating) of this category were not considered in this book. In addition, summarizing in linguistic tasks was ignored in the content provision. In *Vision 2*, there were no tasks in terms of developing sub-categories of concept mapping and diagramming for cognitive tasks. In linguistic tasks, the context was not taken into account. In *Vision3*, predicting and diagraming sub-categories from the cognitive category were not identified. Role-playing was also ignored in interpersonal tasks. Moreover, in all textbooks, *Vision1*, *Vision2*, and *Vision3*, there were no tasks in terms of self-evaluating and reflecting on affective categories. The final analysis of the course books, the frequencies, and differences of tasks, and the detailed results of the questionnaire, including percentages and means of responses, are provided in the following sections.

4.2. Results for the Checklist

To represent the details of tasks, Table 4.2 shows the frequencies and percentages of the tasks in *Vision 1*, *Vision 2*, and *Vision 3* based on Nunan's typology:

Table 4. 2 Frequencies of the Different Task Types in the Vision Series

		<i>Vision 1</i>		<i>Vision 2</i>		<i>Vision 3</i>		<i>P</i>
		<i>F</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%	
Cognitive Tasks								
<i>Classifying</i>	There are some tasks to encourage learners to classify similar things in groups.	36	39.56	35	38.46	20	21.97	.071
<i>Predicting</i>	Some sections encourage the learners to predict the learning process.	6	66.66	3	33.33	0	0	.317
<i>Inducing</i>	There are some tasks looking for the patterns and rules of forming a tense	10	55.55	3	16.66	5	27.77	.115
<i>Taking note</i>	The students are persuaded to write the outlines in their own words in a text.	0	0	1	50	1	50	1.00
<i>Concept mapping</i>	The main ideas in a text are provided as a map.	0	0	0	0	1	100	-
<i>Inferencing</i>	Learners are encouraged to use their knowledge to learn something new.	16	80	1	5	3	15	.000
<i>Discriminating</i>	The learners are asked to classify the main ideas and supporting information.	0	0	6	50	6	50	1.00
<i>Diagramming</i>	Diagrams are used to label the text information.	3	100	0	0	0	0	-
Interpersonal Tasks								
<i>Co-operating</i>	Working in small groups, completing the tasks, and sharing their ideas are considered.	9	60	3	20	3	20	.091
<i>Role-playing</i>	One of the tasks for speaking skill is role-playing.	6	66.66	3	33.33	0	0	.317
Linguistic Tasks								
<i>Conversational patterns</i>	The specific expressions are used to start conversations or invite the learners to begin.	10	33.33	8	26.66	12	40	.670
<i>Practicing</i>	Enough exercises are considered in all categories to improve the learners' skills.	27	34.17	23	29.11	29	36.70	.702
<i>Using context</i>	The context is important when teaching unknown words, phrases, and concepts.	6	85.71	0	0	1	14.28	.059
<i>Summarizing</i>	Learners are asked to summarize the major points in a text.	0	0	2	33.33	4	66.66	.414

<i>Selective listening</i>	The listening skills focuses on the general meaning rather than understanding every word.	7	28	8	32	10	40	.756
<i>Skimming</i>	There are some tasks to improve getting general ideas of a text.	4	28.57	6	42.85	4	28.57	.751
Affective Tasks								
<i>Personalizing</i>	In some tasks, learners share their own opinions, feelings, and ideas.	6	42.85	5	35.71	3	21.42	.607
<i>Self-evaluating</i>	There are some tasks involving rating the learners on your own.	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
<i>Reflecting</i>	The learners are asked to think about ways they can learn best.	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
Creative Tasks								
<i>Brainstorming</i>	The learners work in a group and think about a topic and speak about the new words and ideas that they know.	6	50	4	33.33	2	16.66	.368

Table 4.5 shows the frequencies for the different subscales of the checklist related to *Vision 1*, *Vision 2*, and *Vision 3*. As for the first subscale, i.e., cognitive tasks, it could be found that there was no significant difference between the number of classifying tasks for the three books in the series because the results of the Chi-square test yielded the p -value of .071, which was greater than the .05 level of significance. Likewise, it could be argued that in this category of tasks, there were no significant differences among the three English books with regard to predicting, inducing, note-taking, and discriminating tasks ($p > .05$).

For concept mapping and diagramming tasks, it was not possible to run the Chi-square since two out of three cells were zero, but it could be understood that the differences among the three books were not considerable.

Regarding the interpersonal tasks, the three books of *Vision 1*, *Vision 2*, and *Vision 3* did turn out to be significantly different from one another with regard to neither the cooperating nor the role-playing subcategories ($p > .05$). As is expected from previous results, such as the large size of the classrooms and insufficient time (Torki & Chalak, 2017; Parvane, 2016; Tabatabaei & Hadi, 2011, and Amini et al., 2019); and the focus on form and memory (Ghorbanchian et al., 2014; Sadeghi & Richard, 2015, and Alemi et al. 2020), some tasks related to communicative language learning were not considered in the Iranian course

books focusing on managing the classroom and improving learners' proficiency in grammar. These results were also reported by Alemi et al. (2020) in other book series taught in Iran in terms of ignorance of social interaction and cooperative learning to construct cognitive and emotional images of reality. Additionally, Ahmadi and Derakhshan (2016) came to the same conclusion regarding the incorporation of structure and neglecting the language's communicative function in Iranian English textbooks. Similarly, concerning linguistic tasks, none of the subcategories of conversational patterns, practicing, using context, summarizing, selective listening, and skimming had p -values less than .05, indicating that they were not significantly different in terms of their frequencies of use in the three books in the *Vision* series.

For affective tasks, there were no self-evaluating and reflecting tasks in the three books, and in terms of personalizing tasks, the differences among the three books failed to reach statistical significance. According to Alemi et al. (2020), affective tasks, such as self-evaluation and personalizing, were not included in English course books in Iran, and this lack of affective tasks had a negative impact on students' self-confidence and motivation. The same results were reported in a study conducted by Papi (2015) in terms of the lowest frequency of independent tasks involving self-assessment (static tasks) and independent projects (dynamic tasks). Finally, concerning the creative task of brainstorming, the three books did not appear to be significantly different from one another ($p > .05$). Based on Ledbetter (2010), brainstorming leads people to new methods of thinking and taking notes based on new reasoning (p. 18). In other words, how to encourage learners to find facts and seek out additional and unknown information by discussing in groups based on what they already know or by using other books or the Internet to gain new knowledge (East, 2021, p. 54) can inspire them. To clarify this issue in this study, I reference Brown (2000), who claims that an English classroom is not a place to gather learners of different abilities and backgrounds, but it is an interaction-based place focusing on optimal tasks to stimulate the learners to create their own linguistic skills in a socially constructed process. In addition, these kinds of tasks are called projects and refer to freer creative works that are completed

in pairs or groups by organized skills, predicted, planned, and rehearsed some situations in typical real-life (Willis, 1996, p.27). These kinds of tasks were paid the least in those course books, according to Alemi et al. (2021) when they analyzed the junior high schools course books in Iran.

In Table 4.6, the total frequencies for each category of tasks are shown along with the results of the Chi-square test conducted to examine the possible differences among the three books of *Vision 1*, *Vision 2*, and *Vision 3*.

Table 4. 3 Total Frequencies for Each Subsection of the Checklist

Books	<i>Vision 1</i>		<i>Vision 2</i>		<i>Vision 3</i>		<i>P</i>
Frequencies/Percentages	<i>F</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%	
Cognitive Tasks	71	45.51	49	31.41	36	23.07	.002
Interpersonal Tasks	15	62.50	6	25	3	12	.008
Linguistic Tasks	54	33.54	47	29.19	60	37.26	.454
Affective Tasks	6	42.85	5	35.71	3	21.42	.607
Creative Tasks	6	50	4	33.33	2	16.66	.368

Table 4.6 shows that for cognitive tasks (in total), there were significant differences among the three books, with *Vision 1* having the most cognitive tasks. Moreover, this book had the most number of interpersonal tasks and there was a significant difference between *Vision 1* on the one hand and the other two books on the other hand with respect to interpersonal tasks ($p < .05$). However, for linguistic tasks, affective tasks, and creative tasks, the differences among the three books failed to reach statistical significance. These results could be shown in the bar graph in Figure 4.1.

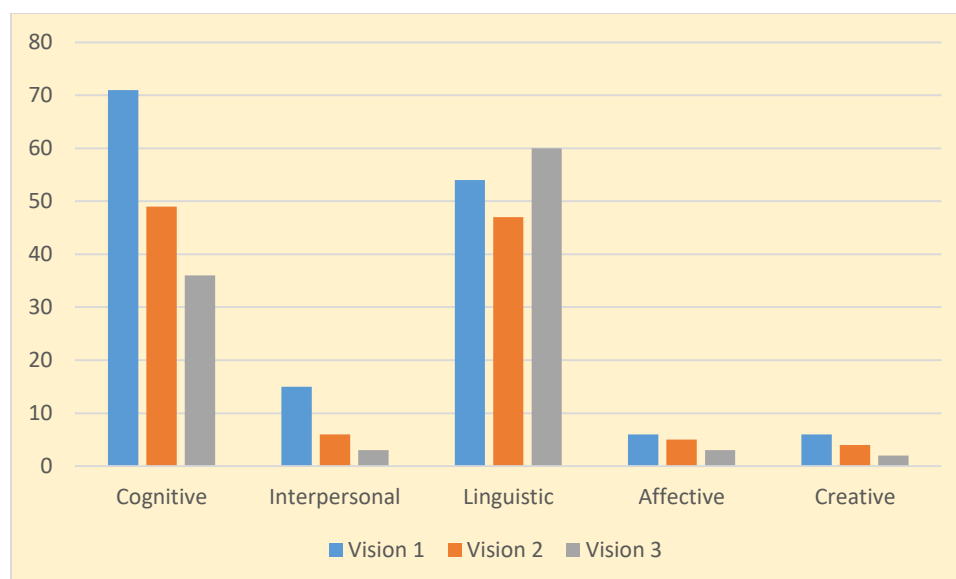


Figure 4. 1 Total frequencies for tasks types in the Vision series

The bar graph in Figure 4.1 clearly shows that the differences among the three books are minimal with regard to affective and creative tasks. As for linguistic tasks, *Vision 2* did not have as many linguistic tasks as *Vision 1* or *Vision 3*, but still, the differences among them were not large enough to be of statistical significance. However, regarding both cognitive and interpersonal tasks, *Vision 1* had the highest number of these tasks and was considerably different from the other two books in this regard. According to the findings, the researcher found that the most considered tasks were cognitive and linguistic tasks in all three course books; some other researchers also achieved similar findings (Mizbani et al., 2020; Alemi et al., 2020; Riazi & Mosalanejad, 2010).

4.3. Results of the Questionnaire

The data collected from the questionnaire were tabulated and for each item, an item mean score was calculated. The item mean score shows whether the respondents agreed with a given statement (if the mean score is greater than 3.00, which is the average value of the

choices) or disagreed with that statement (in case the mean score is lower than 3.00). Table 4.7 presents the results for the different subsections of the questionnaire:

Table 4. 4 Results of Descriptive Statistics Comparing the Pretest and Posttest Scores of the Control Group

<i>Statements</i>	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean
<i>Goals and rationale</i>						
1. The goal or goals of the task obvious a) to you, b) to your students.	0	3	1	22	8	4.02
2. Tasks are appropriate to the learners' proficiency level.	2	2	4	20	6	3.76
3. Tasks reflect a real-world or pedagogic rationale appropriately.	1	12	12	8	1	2.88
4. Tasks encourage learners to apply classroom learning to the real world.	4	15	6	8	2	2.68
5. Tasks are interesting and motivating to the students.	2	13	13	6	0	2.67
<i>Input</i>						
6. Tasks are based on authentic or naturalistic source materials	1	11	7	14	2	3.14
7. The tasks are not authentic, but they are appropriate to the goal(s) of the lessons.	0	5	11	16	3	3.48
8. The difficulty level of verbal input data (linguistic data, using language effectively) is appropriate for task participants.	1	5	9	18	2	3.42
9. The existence of non-verbal input data is useful for task-based activities.	2	6	9	16	2	3.28
10. Input data positively activates collaborative language learning.	1	7	9	16	2	3.31
<i>Setting</i>						
11. The setting confined to the classroom.	3	3	7	7	15	3.80
12. Classroom setting is the most interesting to task participants.	3	12	9	8	3	2.88
13. Classroom setting is based on operating on an individual basis.	0	3	5	20	7	3.88
14. The most useful setting for discussions and decision-making process in a group.	2	10	9	7	7	3.20
15. The setting which is most likely to need teacher's help and guidance.	4	1	5	12	13	3.82
<i>Activity (task) types</i>						
16. Tasks are at the appropriate level of difficulty for the students.	1	6	8	15	5	3.48
17. Tasks are structured so that it can be undertaken at different levels of difficulty	0	6	8	18	3	3.51
18. At the level of the unit or lesson, communicative tasks are integrated with other activities and exercises designed to provide learners with mastery of the linguistic system.	4	3	13	11	4	3.22
<i>Activity (task) themes</i>						
19. Different themes or topic such as science, history, and environmental studies are considered to organize the tasks.	3	6	2	20	4	3.45
20. Themes are chosen from an analysis of student's interests, needs and academic goals.	6	11	9	6	3	2.67
21. Themes make the learners involved actively in all phases of the learning process.	3	10	9	10	3	3.00

In the *Goals and Rationale* subsection, items # 1 ($M = 4.02$) and 2 ($M = 3.76$) received mean scores greater than the average value of the choices (i.e., 3.00). This means that the respondents agreed that (a) the goals of the tasks are obvious to them and/or their students, and (b) the tasks are appropriate for the proficiency level of the students. However, items # 3 ($M = 2.88$), 4 ($M = 2.68$), and 5 ($M = 2.67$) had lower-than-average mean scores, indicating that the teachers disagreed that (a) tasks appropriately reflect a real-world or pedagogic rationale, (b) tasks encourage learners to apply classroom learning to the real world, and (c) tasks are interesting and motivating for the students. To approve this matter, Zohrabi et al. (2014) showed the same results and claimed that as English textbooks in Iran were mainly grammar-based, they could not meet the learners' need to apply classroom learning to the real world as well as not compatible with the rules of communicative language teaching. In the same vein, Karapetyan and Aslanabadi (2015) concluded that it was essential to lead the language learning in a social context to simulate social interactions in group working and pair working in English classrooms in Iran.

In the *Input* subsection of the questionnaire, all the item means appeared to be above average, which means that the respondents expressed their agreement with the following statements: (a) tasks are based on authentic, naturalistic source materials (item # 6, $M = 3.14$), (b) the tasks are not authentic, but are appropriate to the goals of the lesson (item # 7, $M = 3.48$), (c) the difficulty level of the verbal input is appropriate for the task participants (item # 8, $M = 3.42$), (d) the existence of non-verbal input data is useful for task-based activities (item # 9, $M = 3.28$), and (e) input data positively activates collaborative language learning (item # 10, $M = 3.31$). Authentic materials act as a bridge to fill the distance between the real world and the classroom situation (Ghanbari et al., 2015), which was insufficient in Iranian textbooks (Alemi et al., 2020; Dahmardeh, 2012). Khosravani et al. (2014) claimed that the textbook providers in Iran paid least attention to the life skills in high school course books; therefore, authentic materials were needed to develop learners' interactional skills and their motivation toward learning English (Goodarzi et al., 2021). However, collaborative tasks were analyzed in these course books

involving pair and group work that were also included in those course books, and the same findings were found in research conducted by Papi (2015) and Alemi et al. (2020).

The next subsection of the questionnaire on *Setting* had just one item with a mean lower than average (item # 12, $M = 2.88$), through which the respondents expressed their disagreement with the proposition that the classroom setting was the most interesting setting for task participants. However, they agreed with all the other statements, stating that (a) the learning setting is confined to the classroom, (b) the classroom setting is based on operating on an individual basis, (c) the most useful setting for discussions and the decision-making process is a group, and (d) the classroom setting is the one that is most likely to need teachers' help and guidance. One of the issues outlined in English classrooms in Iran has been a boring and uninspiring learning environment. According to teachers' disagreements, we can conclude that learners cannot feel more autonomous in the learning process (Xie, 2021), and they are also not able to complete the tasks autonomously because of the teachers' dependency and supervision, which is mentioned by some Iranian researchers as well (Derakhshan, 2022; Ahmadi & Mahdavi-Zafarghandi, 2013; Mohamadpour, 2013).

For the *Activity Types* subsection, all three items had greater-than-average mean scores, which indicated that the surveyed teachers agreed that (a) tasks are at the appropriate level of difficulty for the students, (b) tasks are structured so that they can be undertaken at different levels of difficulty, and at the level of the unit or lesson, communicative tasks are integrated with other activities and exercises designed to provide learners with mastery of the linguistic system.

Finally, in the *Activity Themes* subsection, the only item with which the respondents disagreed was item # 20 ($M = 2.67$), stating that themes are chosen based on an analysis of students' interests, needs, and academic goals. That was approved by Gheitasi et al. (2020) in a study to evaluate the themes applied in the Visions series. They concluded that all

themes were mainly Islamic religious and national identity themes. So, they did not follow the students' needs and interests. They, however, agreed with items # 19 ($M = 3.45$) and 21 ($M = 3.00$), stating respectively that (a) different themes or topics such as science, history, and environmental studies are considered to organize tasks, and (b) themes make the learners actively involved in all the phases of a learning process. However, in addition to the religious themes, there were some other themes, such as Persian culture, Persian animal species, Persian history, Persian scientists, and Persian fascinating arts (Davari & Iranmehr, 2020) that could be useful in engaging the students in the classroom. In a study conducted by Shakourzadeh and Izadpanah (2020), the interesting and familiar themes have been preferred by Iranian learners over the important and difficult themes and topics that can cover the current study's results.

To get an overall picture of the respondents' attitudes, an overall mean score was calculated for each subsection of the questionnaire, and item mean scores in each subsection were compared against the average value of the choices (3.00) by means of a one-sample *t*-test to see if the respondents' level of (dis)agreement with a subsection reached statistical significance or not. The results of these analyses are provided in Table 4.8.

Table 4. 5 One-sample T-Test Results

	Test Value = 3					
	<i>T</i>	<i>Df</i>	Overall Mean	Sig. (2-tailed)	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Goal and Rationale	.705	4	3.20	.519	-.5930	.9970
Input	5.529	4	3.32	.005	.1623	.4897
Setting	2.564	4	3.51	.062	-.0427	1.0747
Activity Types	4.380	2	3.40	.048	.0072	.7995
Activity Themes	.177	2	3.04	.876	-.9326	1.0126

Looking at the overall mean scores of the subsections, it can be seen that for all five subsections, the mean scores are higher than average, which means that, on the whole, the teachers agreed with the statements in those subsections. Since the p -values under the *Sig.* (2-tailed) column for the *Input* and *Activity Types* subsections were lower than the .05 level of significance, it could be argued that for these two subsections, the teachers' agreement reached a significant level. However, for the other three subsections, teachers' levels of agreement could not reach statistical significance.

Chapter Five

Discussion and Conclusion

5.1. Introduction

This chapter contains a summary of the findings that emerge from the research questions and the results of the previous literature. The researcher will discuss and present acceptable answers to the research questions. Some recommendations for further research will be made and the limitations of the study will be identified. This chapter will also present the implications of the study and some suggestions for improving the teaching process and delivery of materials in general. The qualitative findings will be presented as critically reflective reports by analyzing the presence of tasks in Iranian textbooks, while the quantitative findings are obtained from experienced teachers as a complementary part of the research study. This study provides an overview of the presence of task types in English textbooks and an interpretation of the placement of task-based learning in Iran.

This study reflects teachers' perceptions regarding the use of task-based learning and teaching in the curriculum of Iranian high schools and the complexity of implementing the method with a number of shortcomings and a lack of appropriate frameworks in the Iranian context. It has been suggested that these types of textbooks have some pedagogical frameworks that are still influenced by translation language, form-based structures, and teacher-centered classrooms; therefore, this context provides an uncertain framework for the role of communicative competence and EFL learners as the main responsible factor for learning a second language.

From the results of the questionnaire and the researcher's analysis, some interesting insights and facts emerged, which also supported some previous findings of the research studies in terms of the research questions.

RQ1: Are task-based materials and language performance conducted as part of the curriculum in English course books in Iran?

RQ2: To what extent are task-based materials and language performance employed in high schools in Iran, (according to Nunan's (1989) theory of task components)?

5.2. Discourse Analysis in Relation to Task-based Language Learning (RQ1)

This section provides the answer to the first research question. The presentation of results is divided into two sections according to the research questions. All subscales of Nunan's typology (1999, 2004), namely *classifying*, *interfering*, *role-playing*, *conversational pattern*, *self-evaluating*, *brainstorming*, etc. (Appendix 2), were considered to analyze the course books in terms of *cognitive* tasks, *interpersonal* tasks, *linguistic* tasks, *affective* tasks, and *creative* tasks as the main categories.

The findings revealed that the *Vision* series was mainly designed based on the *cognitive* and *linguistic* tasks, with a limited look at *affective* and *creative* tasks following the *interpersonal* tasks. The reasons for choosing these tasks might be the providers' beliefs about applying the explicit teaching of linguistic features as the starting point of learning L2 (Le Diem & Newton, 2021) and rules for producing and understanding L2 based on common attributes as cognitive strategies (Brown, 2000, p. 125). The results of the present study echo the previous research by Gordani (2010) and Mizbani & Chalak (2017), which included the analysis of the cognitive tasks of English textbooks in terms of different levels of Bloom's taxonomy (knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation). They showed that the three lower levels of cognitive skills (knowledge, comprehension, and application) were taught in English course books in Iran. In accordance with previous findings and the results of the study, I confirm that practicing,

producing, and applying the knowledge in the classroom are focused on in the Iranian curriculum which is important as an implication to conduct subsequent research.

This study found that linguistic tasks were considered more than other tasks in the course books and it meant those were designed to improve grammar knowledge rather than communication outside the classroom, which is consistent with Jamalvandi's (2014) findings of isolated vocabulary and grammatical structures in Iranian textbooks. Alemi et al. (2020) also referred to the focus on linguistic tasks in English course books in Iran and the failure of linguistic tasks to prepare learners for real-life communication. My findings are similar to those of the other studies (Alemi et al. 2021; Ahmadi & Derakhshan, 2016; Goodarzi et al., 2021), and in addition to the previous results, I found that the reproductive tasks, such as linguistic tasks might be emphasized to prepare the students mainly for the final examinations and assessments.

However, this study looked at *interpersonal* tasks in the *Vision* series that involved role-playing and cooperating, which could provide good opportunities for learners to improve their language performance and communicative skills. In addition, *creative* tasks are also considered as means for communicating outside the classroom, but the researcher encountered a lack of application of the tasks in those textbooks. A complete absence of tasks in high school textbooks was evolving, which was in line with Alemi et al. (2020, 2021). My findings, on the other hand, showed that the least organized tasks in the *Vision* series were *interpersonal*, *affective*, and *creative* tasks. I confirm the findings of Sadeghi and Richards (2015), who referred to a lack of interpersonal tasks in English classrooms in Iran as a barrier to improving interactive competencies by using short dialogues to explain language functions and a poor introduction of the nature of conversational interaction. The results of the study indicated that some tasks, such as dialogues, role-playing, and communication activities, were not evolved in the high school course books in Iran to equip learners for real-life interaction, as also concluded by Salehi and Amini (2016). As Nunan (2004) suggests, the role-play tasks of out-of-classroom learning for improving

communicative skills should be involved to change output from reproductive to creative and ‘communicative language use’ (Ellis, 2018, p. 32). My findings are similar to those of Sadeghi and Richards (2015) and Alemi et al. (2020), but according to the results and the literature review, I conclude that there are difficulties in developing communicative competence. These difficulties may be the result of a lack of cooperative sense among Iranian students as well as providing the competitive and supervised educational environment that has been internalized among the learners by traditional teaching methods.

Affective tasks were analyzed to evaluate higher-order thinking, self-evaluation, and autonomy among Iranian students. The percentages of affective tasks (less than 10 percent for all three textbooks) showed that there was no evidence for designing a framework to provide a reflective English context. Historically, there have been aspects of restrictions in the Iranian educational system that relegate the learning process to the predetermined rules of a hidden ‘panopticon’. This is a situation in contrast with autonomy and confidence where English course books, the curriculum, teachers, and learners are seen in a state of conscious and permanent surveillance that has been impacted automatically (Foucault, 1975, p. 201). From the literature, three linked concepts are considered when the role of strategies is outlined to learn a second language: autonomy, awareness, and action (Brown, 2000), which are replaced with restriction, prescriptions, and repetition in the Iranian context that is offered as an idea in this study. One of the key findings of the current study was echoing the most important barrier of improving Iranian learners' ability to achieve confidence and act on their knowledge to deal with new problems and situations in the classroom. To achieve this ability, using an appropriate technique and finding out the essential information, both facts and principles should be taken into account, through which ‘critical thinking or reflective thinking and self-evaluating’ skills are developed (Bloom et al., 1956, p. 38). My findings are consistent with the idea of highly prescriptive subjects and limited opportunities for learners to think about the best way to learn and rate their own progress, as well as a lack of confidence and encouraging creative thinking among

learners (Partovi & Wyness, 2022). Interestingly, in their research, Shakhshi Dastgahian & Scull (2022) suggest that teachers' autonomy is also an important issue in directing the reforms to their teaching in terms of interactive reflection and self-evaluating. As a conclusion and answer to the first question, the analysis of high school textbooks in Iran can be seen as a hint that the *Vision* series is provided as a task-based framework, but the current framework excludes all proposed tasks to achieve real-world or target tasks through pedagogical tasks according to Nunan's (2004) framework for TBLT (Figure. 5.1). In relation to Fig 5.1 adopted from Nunan (2004), enabling skills and pedagogical tasks are considered in Iranian course books, but rehearsal and activation tasks, e.g., role play, problem-solving, and information exchange tasks that should have an obvious relationship to the real world tasks were not identified in the *Vision* series.

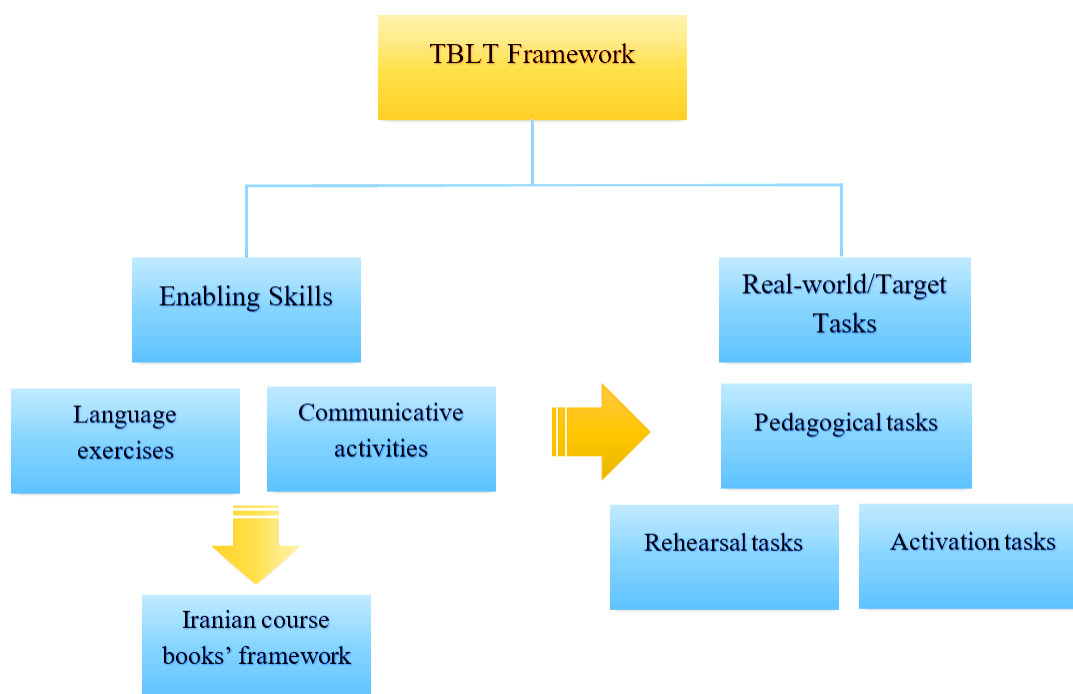


Figure 5. 1, A supposed framework of Iranian course books in relation to the TBLT framework by Nunan (2004)

According to the purposes of the TBLT approach, a pedagogy should train learners based on a systematic interrelationship among grammatical structures, meaning, and use (Larsen-Freeman, 2001, as cited in Nunan, 2004), while the findings of the current study indicated that linguistic and cognitive tasks were considered as the main goal of the learning process. However, higher-order thinking, reflective, and communicative competencies are ignored in these course books when we feel the blank spaces of creative tasks, affective tasks, and interpersonal tasks in these course book series. This supports the idea that the framework of the English course books in Iranian high schools follows the restricted and prescriptive materials under the surveillance during the learning process in the educational environment.

5.3. Analysis of task-based materials and task components of English course books in Iran (RQ2)

From the questionnaire data, I identified some interesting teachers' perceptions towards the task components in the English course books in Iran. Thus, in answer to RQ2, the definite factors, namely '*goals and rationale*', '*input*', '*setting*', '*activity or task types*', '*activity or task themes*' were analyzed through a questionnaire. Interestingly, the goals and level of difficulty of the tasks seem to be obvious and appropriate for learners. While the tasks in Iranian course books could not address the goals of the real world and motivate learners that is the most crucial character of the English learning process. Some research has shown that there aren't enough tasks in English course books in Iran to improve real-life skills and confirm the findings in the current study (Alemi et al., 2020, 2021; Montafej et al., 2021; Pirzad et al., 2021; Rasti & Nouhi Jadesi, 2021; Partovi & Wyness, 2020; Mahdavi-rad, 2017; Ansarian et al., 2016; Parvane, 2016). Together with my findings, Torki and Chalak (2017) demonstrated that communicative competence is met inside the classroom, but teachers are unable to encourage learners to deal with communication outside the classroom due to teaching in crowded classes and insufficient time for more

practices in pairs and groups focusing on brainstorming and interpersonal tasks to develop interactive competences.

The data in relation to the *Input* subsection of the questionnaire indicated that three issues were addressed in the Iranian course books: a) authentic source materials, b) verbal and non-verbal inputs, and c) collaborative language learning. Authentic materials give learners an opportunity to improve strategies for understanding language as it is really used (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011, p. 142) that were also found in data from junior high school analysis (Alemi et al., 2020; Dahmardeh, 2012). Looking at Dahmardeh's conclusion and my findings, authentic texts have been included in English course books in Iran, while the texts also included vocabulary lists, explanatory comments, and fixed questions to achieve a certain level of adaptation to the Iranian context.

The data from the questionnaire suggested that spoken and written language, pictures, maps, etc., were considered in the Iranian course books to motivate key ideas to brainstorm that were reported in the Korean context by Jeon (2005) as well. However, *collaborative* language learning was found in Iranian textbooks, but some constraints such as a lack of motivation of learners, unfamiliarity with cooperative strategies as the main concern, inflexibility of the syllabus, non-circular chairs, unequal opportunities, and non-subject matter in groups were mentioned to avoid managing the collaborative materials in the classrooms (Keramati & Gillies, 2020). It is discovered that collaborative materials such as pair and group work in English course books are considered in Iran, which is in line with Alemi's (2020) and Papi's (2015) findings. The results of my study suggest that collaborative materials need an appropriate setting that is provided in the Iranian context for individual activities and group work, while the large size of the classroom and grammar-based curriculum (Amini et al., 2019) may create an uninspiring learning environment.

According to the *activity (task) types* and the teachers' agreement, this subscale received significant statistics among other subscales, which means the level of difficulty of tasks is appropriate for all learners. The findings of the study suggested that communicative tasks with other exercises aimed to improve learners' linguistic skills. The results of the study showed that communicative tasks included grammatical knowledge to deal with meaning (Nunan, 2004, p. 4) and form. Looking at the results of Alemi et al., (2020) and my findings, grammar knowledge is the main emphasis of the learners' producing utterances.

Themes contribute to designing different topics and a wide variety of content according to the student's needs. Content can be prepared with different subjects in the school curriculum, for instance, science, math, geography, or history (Nunan, 2004). Teachers in this study agreed with providing the task themes appropriately despite some shortcomings in considering students' interests, needs, and academic goals. These findings echoed the results of Gheitasi et al. (2020), who also found that all of the themes are mainly specific (e.g., Islamic religious and national identity themes); however, some other themes, such as Persian culture, Persian animal species, Persian history, Persian scientists, and Persian fascinating arts (Davari & Iranmehr, 2019), are used in the course books, which referred to the importance of applying cultural themes to stimulate learners to engage in all phases of the learning process.

In response to RQ2, I discuss the teachers' insights about the extent of task-based language teaching in English course books in Iran. Looking at the overall mean scores of the subsections, it is clear that all teachers in Iranian high schools agreed on a task-based language learning and teaching framework in English textbooks, while their agreement on *input* and *activity types* is significantly higher. Therefore, Iranian textbooks addressed the TBLT framework at a normal level, while this level was very high in terms of preparing input and activity (task) types that echo collaborative language learning in the classroom and provide learners with mastery of the linguistic system.

5.4. Recommendations for further research

Although the results of the present study are indicative and suggestive, the findings should be considered cautiously. The evaluations of task-based language teaching in this study only echo one of the many methods to address the issue. There are undoubtedly other significant theories and frameworks for analyzing the contents from various aspects of second language acquisition in order to provide practical methods of task analysis and content improvement. To achieve a comprehensive and extensive view of the subject, a larger population of teachers and learners would improve the outcomes in this area through in-depth investigation of the concerned issues. Due to time constraints and Internet problems in Iran, the researcher couldn't consider it.

Ideally, an interview with learners in this domain will provide further perceptions and realities about learning L2 through English course books in Iran and explore the strengths and weaknesses of those texts from the learners' perspective. It will be interesting to learn more facts and figures about the outcomes of teaching and curriculum among Iranian students. In addition, more research can be conducted in terms of new trends, potential trends in teaching English, and the ways teachers can deal with the complexities of task-based language teaching and effective approaches such as reflective and autonomous classrooms as well as online or blended learning TBL tasks. So, further detailed investigation into epistemology and task-based language teaching and learning is required to enhance the learning experience.

5.5. Limitations of the Study

The population of the study was English teachers in Iran with a small size of participants. The limitations of the present study were the lack of a large sample to achieve generalization in the teaching population in Iran. In addition, another important limitation

refers to gathering the data only from the teachers' insights while the students' points of view and their perceptions of English course books can be useful in teaching and learning English. They have firsthand knowledge of the learning process and have unique perspectives on teaching and learning as audiences who have encountered different methods of learning that teachers have never encountered before. Despite some interesting findings from discourse analysis and the questionnaire, some realities need to be obtained from participants using a mixed methods research study by collecting interview data and recording teachers' and students' narratives. Interviews help listen to and collect their voices. Moreover, the analysis of this research is limited by Nunan's theory and typology (1989, 1999) for classification and identifying the task components. It would be more practical if some other methods or mixed methods with different aspects of analyzing task-based language teaching were agreed upon.

5.6. Implications

Despite the fact that TBLT is not a new approach in Iran, there is no clear evidence of reasons that would prevent conducting TBLT in Iran. Exploring the causes and effects of the drawbacks can be practical for providing and reforming the course books. From the literature review and these study results, there are still some deficits in the English course books with respect to real-life communicative competence, interactive activities, and higher-order thinking practices in the classroom. The main implication in terms of implementing TBLT is the need for delving into the current status of learning a second language which included practicing, producing, and applying the knowledge in the classroom and finding some links to improve task management and guiding learners toward the objectives of out of the classrooms communications in the learning process. According to Nunan (2004) and the results of the study, learners' involvement in the classroom should be more than just memorizing and reproducing the structures. It should be established that course books help learners generate language on their own outside the classroom.

Further key implications refer to the way in which teachers and material providers can help learners develop their cooperative and reflective competencies to work with other students in a group and think about ways they can learn best in a task-based language teaching framework. This reflects a lack of focus on freer creative works completed in groups using organized skills predicted and practiced in real-life activities (Willis, 1996, p. 27). Undoubtedly, an appropriate educational environment in which cooperative activities, interpersonal tasks, and reflective competencies are required to foster learner's linguistic skills in a socially constructed process is required to achieve this goal (Brown, 2000). Moreover, the learners' responsibility and self-assessment should be considered by the material providers and administrators to develop autonomous learning approaches in the classrooms. The results of the present study can act as a contributor to facilitating the development of the relevant materials to stimulate self-evaluation, reflective skills, brainstorming, and communicative competence in the Iranian curriculum. Furthermore, practitioners and curriculum providers may benefit from the study's findings in re-designing English textbooks to provide students with authentic and real-life activities in the interactive and autonomous space of the classroom. The findings of the present study can introduce the role of communicative activities in specific contexts to which learners have not been exposed that are useful for teachers to consider (Candlin & Mercer, 2003, p. 19).

5.8. Summary

This chapter contained the main discussion and conclusion remarks after analyzing English course books with a brief summary of the purposes of the research and the limitations. It includes recommendations for further research focusing on a large group of teachers and students and other analysis approaches such as interviews as well as considering the new theoretical framework to analyze the different aspects of English course books in Iran. A further detailed investigation into the teachers' and learners' beliefs and points of view,

task-based teaching and learning are required to improve the teaching process and enrich students' learning experience. In addition, implications for conducting the research include the importance of paying attention to the communicative competence in English course books, their impact on second language learning, and students' real-life skills.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Questionnaire Form

Appendix 2: Checklist Form

Appendix 3: Ethical Letter

Appendix 4: Example of Initial Analysis of the Course books

Appendix 5: Content Analysis

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Appendix 9: Invitation Letter, Form 2

Appendix 1: Questionnaire Form

This questionnaire involves evaluation of Iranian English Textbooks (Vision series) which are taught in high schools.

Please tick the appropriate number according to the following scale. Just click on the square.

(1) Strongly disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Neither agree nor disagree; (4) Agree; (5) Strongly agree.



<i>Goals and rationale</i>					
1. The goal or goals of the task obvious a) to you, b) to your students.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
2. Tasks are appropriate to the learners' proficiency level.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
3. Tasks reflect a real-world or pedagogic rationale appropriately.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
4. Tasks encourage learners to apply classroom learning to the real world.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
5. Tasks are interesting and motivating to the students.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
<i>Input</i>					
6. Tasks are based on authentic* or naturalistic source materials	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
7. The tasks are not authentic, but they are appropriate to the goal(s) of the lessons.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
8. The difficulty level of verbal input data (linguistic data, using language effectively) is appropriate for task participants.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
9. The existence of non-verbal input data is useful for task-based activities.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
10. Input data positively activates collaborative language learning.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
<i>Setting</i>					
11. The setting confined to the classroom.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
12. Classroom setting is the most interesting to task participants.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
13. Classroom setting is based on operating on an individual basis.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
14. The most useful setting for discussions and decision-making process in a group.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
15. The setting which is most likely to need teacher's help and guidance.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
<i>Activity (task) types</i>					
16. Tasks are at the appropriate level of difficulty for the students.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
17. Tasks are structured so that it can be undertaken at different levels of difficulty	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
18. At the level of the unit or lesson, communicative tasks are integrated with other activities and exercises designed to provide learners with mastery of the linguistic system.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
<i>Activity (task) themes</i>					
19. Different themes or topic such as science, history, and environmental studies are considered to organize the tasks.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
20. Themes are chosen from an analysis of student's interests, needs and academic goals.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
21. Themes make the learners involved actively in all phases of the learning process.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

* 'Authenticity' in this context refers to the use of spoken and written material that has been produced for purposes of communication not for purposes of language teaching.

Appendix 2: Checklist Form

Checklist adopted from (Nunan's typology, 1999)

5 points Likert scale: (1) very frequently, (2) frequently, (3) occasionally, (4) rarely, (5) never

Cognitive Tasks	
<i>Classifying</i>	There are some tasks to encourage learners to classify similar things in groups.
<i>Predicting</i>	Some sections encourage the learners to predict the learning process.
<i>Inducing</i>	There are some tasks looking for the patterns and rules of forming a tense
<i>Taking note</i>	The students are persuaded to write the outlines in their own words in a text.
<i>Concept mapping</i>	The main ideas in a text are provided as a map.
<i>Inferencing</i>	Learners are encouraged to use their knowledge to learn something new.
<i>Discriminating</i>	The learners are asked to classify the main ideas and supporting information.
<i>Diagramming</i>	Diagrams are used to label the text information.
Interpersonal Tasks	
<i>Co-operating</i>	Working in small groups, completing the tasks, and sharing their ideas are considered.
<i>Role-playing</i>	One of the tasks for speaking skill is role-playing.
Linguistic Tasks	
<i>Conversational patterns</i>	The specific expressions are used to start conversations or invite the learners to begin.
<i>Practicing</i>	Enough exercises are considered in all categories to improve the learners' skills.
<i>Using context</i>	The context is important when teaching unknown words, phrases, and concepts.
<i>Summarizing</i>	Learners are asked to summarise the major points in a text.
<i>Selective listening</i>	The listening skills focuses on the general meaning rather than understanding every word.
<i>Skimming</i>	There are some tasks to improve getting general ideas of a text.
Affective Tasks	
<i>Personalizing</i>	In some tasks, learners share their own opinions, feelings, and ideas.
<i>Self-evaluating</i>	There are some tasks involving rating the learners on your own.
<i>Reflecting</i>	The learners are asked to think about ways they can learn best.
Creative Tasks	
<i>Brainstorming</i>	The learners work in a group and think about a topic and speak about the new words and ideas that they know.

Appendix 3: Ethical letter



PG2 / E1 FORM

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL

In order for research to result in benefit and minimise risk of harm, it must be conducted ethically. A researcher may not be covered by the University's insurance if ethical approval has not been obtained prior to commencement.

The University follows the OECD Frascati manual definition of **research activity**: "creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications". As such this covers activities undertaken by members of staff, postgraduate research students, and both taught postgraduate and undergraduate students working on dissertations/projects.

The individual undertaking the research activity is known as the "principal researcher".

Ethical approval is not required for routine audits, performance reviews, quality assurance studies, testing within normal educational requirements, and literary or artistic criticism.

Please read the notes for guidance before completing ALL sections of the form.

This form must be completed and approved prior to undertaking any research activity. Please see Checklist for details of process for different categories of application.

SECTION A: About You (Principal Researcher)

1	Full Name:	Farzaneh Pishbin			
2	Tick all boxes that apply:	Member of staff:	☐	Honorary research fellow:	☐
	Undergraduate Student	☐	Taught Postgraduate Student	☒	Postgraduate Research Student
3	Institute/Academic Discipline/Centre:	University of Wales Trinity Saint David Institute of Education and Humanities			
4	Campus:	Lampeter			
5	E-mail address:	Tinafarzaneh3@gmail.com			
6	Contact Telephone Number:	07510816269			
For students:					
7	Student Number:	2012144			
8	Programme of Study:	Full time/postgraduate program of MATESOL			
9	Director of Studies/Supervisor:	Dr. Jessica Clapham (Supervisor)			

SECTION K: Declaration

	The information which I have provided is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I have attempted to identify any risks and issues related to the research activity and acknowledge my obligations and the rights of the participants. In submitting this application I hereby confirm that I undertake to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice which is published on the website: https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/research/research-ethics/		
1	Signature of applicant:	<i>Farzaneh Pishbin</i>	Date: 12th May

For STUDENT Submissions:

2	Director of Studies/Supervisor:	<i>Dr Jessica Clapham</i>	Date: 23.5.22
3	Signature:		

For STAFF Submissions:

4	Academic Director/ Assistant Dean:	NA	Date:
5	Signature:		

Appendix 4: Example of Initial Analysis of the Course books

Linguistics tasks=>practicing

B. Answer the following questions. Affective=> personalizing

1) Is it good to give information to our family about wildlife?

.....

2) Why is protecting the trees helpful for endangered animals?

.....

3) Do you know another simple way to protect wildlife?

.....

technique of finding answers
from clues and from prior
knowledge= Inferencing=>
Cognitive tasks

D. Read the following text. Complete it with 'to be going to' verbs.

Mr. Alavi is a teacher. Tomorrow, he and his students
..... (go) on a school trip. They (go)
to a park out of the city. They (leave) the school
at 9. They (stay) in the park till afternoon. They
..... (go) into nature and clean it. They
(visit) the aquarium in the park, too. Mr. Alavi
(talk) about sea animals there. The students (write)

.....

B. Can you divide the above animals into two groups? How?

Cognitive

tasks=>

classifying

Group 1

.....

.....

.....

.....

Group 2

.....

.....

.....

.....

Appendix 5: Content analysis

● Cognitive tasks
● Linguistic Tasks
● Interpersonal
● Affective

Vision 1

Lesson 2: Vocabulary and Reading

- ← Cognitive Tasks ●

① Look at the picture and answer the questions. (theme of the lesson). They need to predict the lesson materials.

Predicting *

- ← Cognitive Tasks ●

② Ask students to do a mini research and write some adjectives to describe some places. to learn more adjectives. (they knew some adjectives that are provided for them).

Inferencing *

- ← Cognitive Tasks ●

③ Matching Pictures to learn something new.

Inferencing

- ← Cognitive Task ●

④ put the words in a correct group.

Classifying

- ← Linguistics Task ●

⑤ Questions and discussion orally about a conversation.

Conversational Patterns.

- ← Cognitive Task ●

⑥ match the words.

Inferencing X2

- ← Cognitive Task ●

⑦ one odd out

Appendix 6: Letter of Consent



Consent Form for Participants

Title of research: **An Analysis of Task-based Language Teaching Material for Learners in High School Course Books in Iran**

Name of researcher: **Farzaneh Pishbin**

If you need any further information, you can contact my supervisor Dr. Jessica Clapham j.clapham@uwtsd.ac.uk

Thank you for considering taking part in this research. You will be given a copy of this Consent Form to keep and refer to at any time.

I confirm that I understand that by ticking each box I am consenting to this element of the research. I understand that it will be assumed that unticked boxes mean that I DO NOT consent to that part of the study. I understand that by not giving consent for any one element I may be deemed ineligible for the research.

Please tick

☐

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above research. I have had the opportunity to consider the information and asked questions which have been answered satisfactorily.

☐

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason. Furthermore, I understand that I will be able to withdraw my data up to one week after my interview.

☐

3. I consent to the processing of my personal information for the purposes explained to me. I understand that such information will be handled in accordance with the terms of the UK GDPR2018.

☐

4. I understand that the confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained and it will not be possible to identify me in any publications.

☐

5. I agree that the researcher may access my academic records of English intensive reading course for the purpose of this research project.

☐

6. I agree that the researcher may use my unidentifiable data for further research.

☐

7. I understand that the information I have submitted will be published as a report and I can get a copy of it when I asked.

8. I consent to my interview being audio recorded.

Name of participant

Date

Signature

Farzaneh Pishbin

Name of researcher

Date


Signature

Appendix 7: Letter of consent in Persian



فرم رضایت نامه برای شرکت کنندگان (نسخه ی فارسی)

موضوع تحقیق: تحلیلی بر محتوای آموزشی زبان انگلیسی فعالیت محور در کتابهای درسی مقطع دبیرستان در ایران.

نام محقق: فرزانه پیش بین

در صورت نیاز به اطلاعات بیشتر می توانید با استاد راهنمای اینجانب دکتر جسیکا کلافام در ارتباط باشید:

j.clapham@uwtsd.ac.uk

از شرکت شما در این تحقیق بسیار متشکریم. شما یک کپی از فرم رضایت نامه خواهید داشت تا هر زمان که نیاز داشته باشید به آن مراجعه کنید. لطفا موارد زیر را با علامت مشخص نمایید.

- من تایید می کنم که با علامت زدن هر کدام از این موارد، رضایت خود لطفا علامت بزنید

از شرکت در این تحقیق را ابراز می دارم. من کاملاً آگاهی دارم که با علامت زدن هر کدام از بخش ها، عدم رضایتمندی خود جهت شرکت در آن بخش را اعلام داشته ام. من کاملاً متوجه هستم یا علامت زدن هر بخش از تحقیق ممکن است برای این تحقیق فاقد شرایط تشخیص داده شوم.

1- من تایید می کنم که اطلاعات مربوط به تحقیق فوق را مطالعه کرده و متوجه شده ام. من فرصت آن را داشته ام که اطلاعات و سوالات پاسخ داده شده را به شکلی مطلوب بررسی نمایم.

2- من متوجه هستم که شرکت من در این تحقیق داوطلبانه است و می توانم بدون هیچ دلیلی در هر زمان و هر مرحله از تحقیق از همکاری خودداری نمایم. علاوه بر این، من آگاهی کامل دارم که می توانم اطلاعات خود را یک هفته پس از مصاحبه درخواست نمایم.

3- من رضایت خود را از ارائه ی اطلاعات شخصی ام جهت پیگیری اهداف شرح داده شده اعلام می دارم. من کاملاً متوجه هستم که این اطلاعات بر اساس

4- من کاملاً از محرمانه بودن و استفاده از اسمهای مستعار در این تحقیق آگاه هستم

☐

و می دانم از هویت من در هیچ یک از نشریه ها و انتشارات استفاده نخواهد شد.

☐

5- من موافقت خود را جهت دسترسی موارد آکادمیک در زمینه ی ریدینگ

در زمینه ی رسیدن به اهداف تحقیق اعلام می دارم.

☐

6- من موافقت خود را جهت استفاده ی داده ها به صورت غیر قابل شناسایی و محرمانه

توسط محقق در تحقیقات آتی اعلام می دارم.

☐

7- من نسبت به اینکه اطلاعات ارائه شده به عنوان گزارش منتشر شده و من

می توانم نسخه ای از آن را درخواست نمایم آگاهی کامل دارم.

☐

8- من رضایت خود را از انجام مصاحبه یا ضبط صدا اعلام می دارم.

امضاء:

تاریخ:

نام شرکت کننده:

امضاء: Farzaneh Rishbin

تاریخ:

نام محقق: فرزانه ریش بین



Appendix 8: Invitation Letter, Form 1



Form 1

Section One: Purpose of the study

This is a letter for inviting to participate in a research study aims to evaluate the content of the English course books in high schools in Iran in terms of Task-Based Learning material and performance and assess to what extent the contents of the course books. This study will be conducted in Iranian context and among the teachers who teach English more than 8 years. Instrument of the study is a questionnaire adopted from ~~Nunan~~ (1989, 2004).

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study,

- You will be asked to complete a brief demographic questionnaire that includes some questions that will take approximately one minute to complete.
- You will be asked to complete a survey that includes 21 questions that will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

This study is completely voluntary. Everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you choose to be in the study. No one associated with this survey will treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study. Additionally, this study is completely anonymous, no one will know if you did nor did not participate. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind later. You may stop at any time.

Privacy:

Any information you provide will be kept anonymous. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. Also, the researcher will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in the study reports. Data will be kept secure by password protection and data encryption.

Contacts and Questions: If you have questions now or at a later time, you may contact the researcher, Farzaneh ~~Pishbin~~, via Tinafarzaneh3@gmail.com. You can ask any questions you have before you begin the survey.

Appendix 9: Invitation Letter, Form 2



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Section 2

Participation Invitation Letter

Dear Invitee,

My name is *Farzaneh Pishbin*. I am a MA student at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David's TESOL course. I am kindly requesting that you participate in a MA research study with the title: "An Analysis of Task-based Language Teaching Materials for Learners in High School Course Books in Iran." The purpose of this study is to evaluate the content of the English course books in high schools in Iran in terms of Task-Based Learning material and performance and assess to what extent the contents of the course books are in line with Nunan's (1989) theory of task components.

Participation is completely voluntary, and you may withdraw from the study at any time. The study is completely anonymous; therefore, it does not require you to provide your name or any other identifying information. If you would like to participate in the study, please read the informed consent letter that is attached to this email. If the teachers of your institution or school would like to start, please download the informed consent letter and tick the sections on it.

Your participation in the research study will be an important attempt to assist in an effective change in the curriculum and syllabus of course books in Iranian high schools, as well as a big help in improving the applied materials in English and EFL classrooms. Please sign and write your name below if you agree to participate. If you send the signed form back, you will receive Form 2 involving consent letter.

Name:

Date:

Thank you for your time and participation

Sincerely

Farzaneh Pishbin, MA. Student, University of Wales Trinity Saint David